

BEYOND PROJECTS

BOOK

the

*of*

**sculpture series**

**4**



TIPS, TECHNIQUES, INSPIRATIONAL RAMBLINGS, CREATIVE NUDGINGS AND STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS TO HELP YOU CREATE

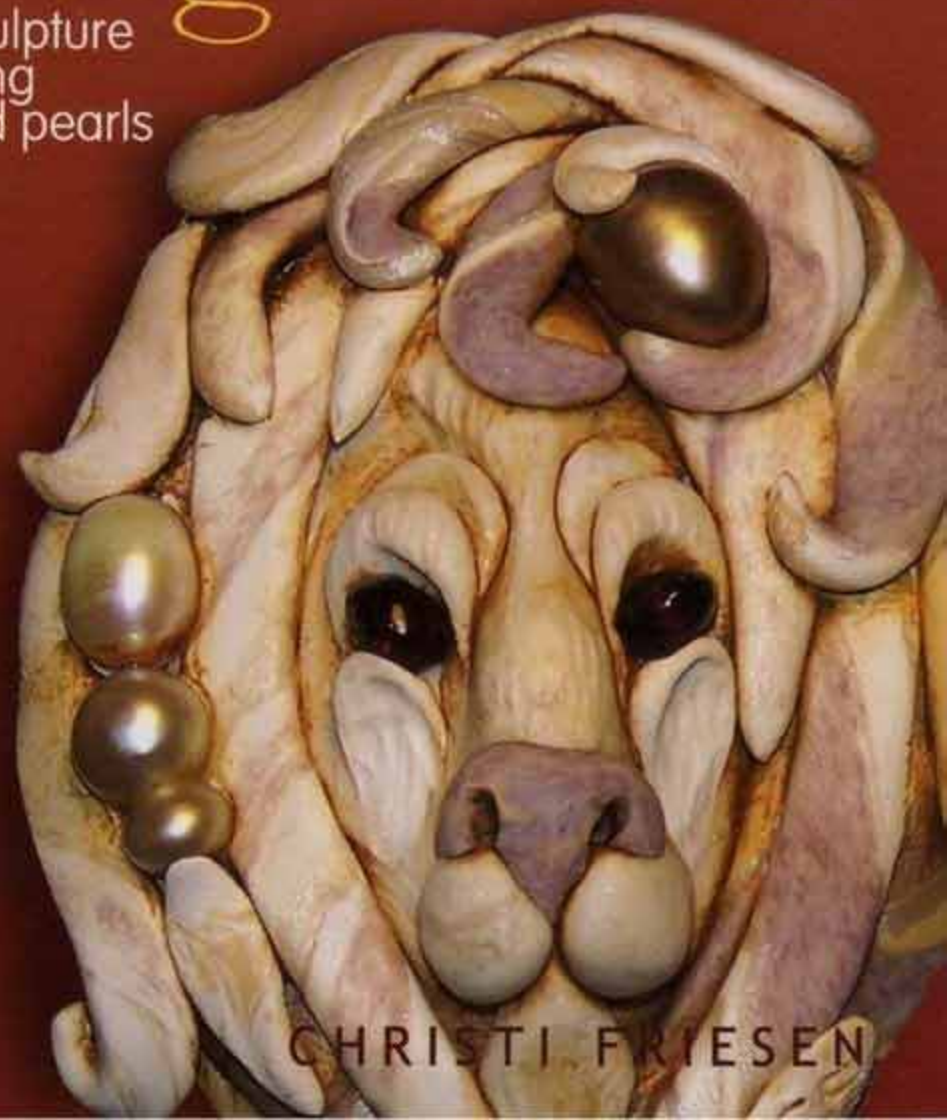
focal beads  
sculptures  
pins

# Cats

big & small

polymer clay sculpture  
incorporating  
stone, beads and pearls

TIPS, TECHNIQUES, INSPIRATIONAL RAMBLINGS, CREATIVE NUDGINGS AND STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS TO HELP YOU CREATE



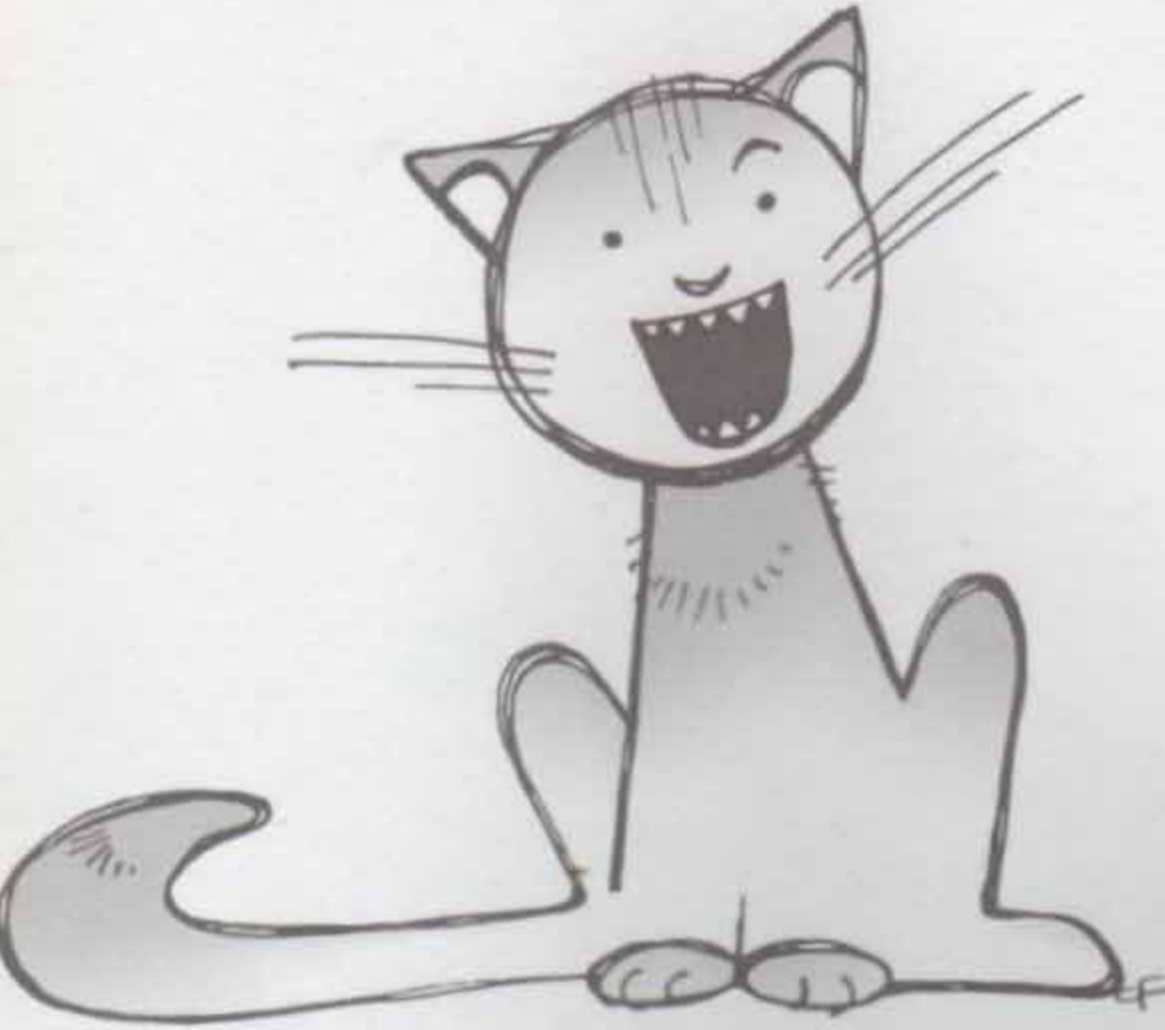
CHRISTI FRIESEN

BEYOND PROJECTS

the



**sculpture series**



focal beads  
sculptures  
pins

# Cats

big & small

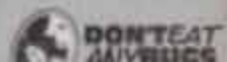


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**RAISE GRATE**



TIPS, TECHNIQUES, INSPIRATIONAL RAMBLINGS, CREATIVE

# Cats

big & small

TIPS, TECHNIQUES, INSPIRATIONAL RAMBLINGS, CREATIVE NUDGINGS AND STEP-BY-STEP INSTRUCTIONS TO HELP YOU CREATE



CHRISTI FRIESEN



why?  
cats?



Because  
all the cat people  
told me that the  
next book HAD to  
be a cat book. (And  
there are alot of  
cat people.)

My family had a  
cat when I was a kid, or rather,  
the cat had us. My sisters and brother and I  
enticed him away from our neighbors (whose cat he was  
originally) with superior kitty snacks. I think the neighbors  
weren't too pleased with us, but once a cat decides  
where he will be, that's the end of it, isn't it? Perhaps  
that's part of our attraction to cats - it's so flattering to be  
noticed by a cat, that we get a bit addicted to it.  
Whatever the reason, they sure have found a place in  
our society, haven't they - they live in our houses, eat our  
food, sleep in our beds, and occasionally grace us with  
their purring attentions.

It's a good arrangement for both of us.



WPCOM

# Here's what you'll need perhaps

see the back of the book in the resource section for more information on these items.

scissors, white glue,  
ribbons, yarn.



hinged  
straight  
pins



assorted  
beads



Of course you will use polymer clay as the primary medium for all the projects in this book. There are several different brands of clay, all with excellent properties. In this book, I am using Premo clay (a Sculpey product) and all the color suggestions will be based on that brand.

Most of the other items on this page are optional. You can still do the projects without them, but you'll wish you had them!

lampworked  
glass beads



jingle  
bell beads



polymer  
clay




mica powders  
(these are PearlEx brand)



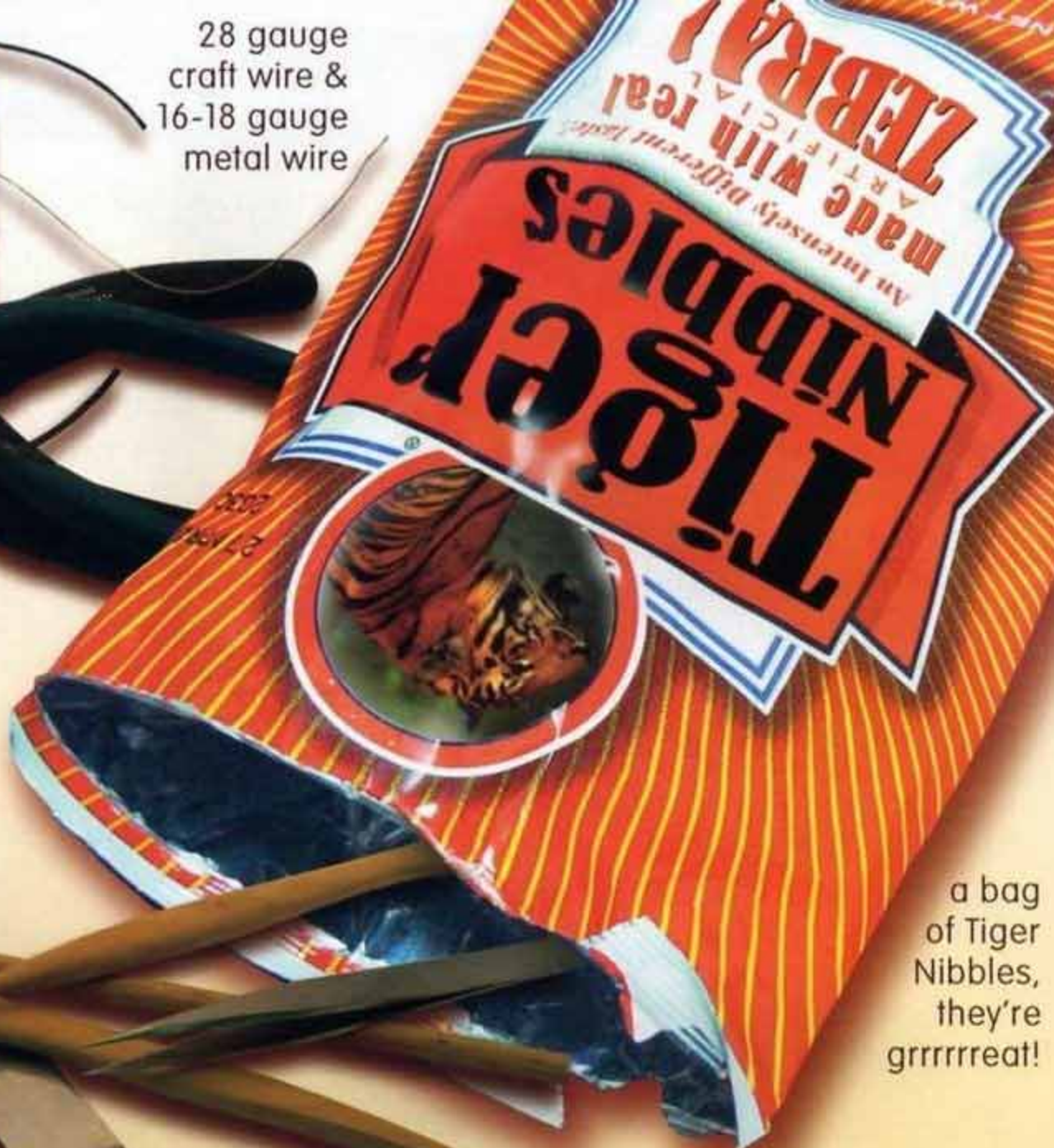
Translucent  
Liquid Sculpey  
(also called liquid clay)






28 gauge  
craft wire &  
16-18 gauge  
metal wire

wire cutters  
& pliers




a bag  
of Tiger  
Nibbles,  
they're  
grrrrreat!



wooden sculpting tools,  
cutting blade, needle tool,  
needlenose tweezers

In addition to the tools and supplies on these pages, you will need an oven in which to bake your finished pieces, and an oven thermometer to check the temperature. It is also helpful to have index cards or card-stock paper as a work surface (your project can go directly into the oven on the paper).

beading cable, assorted colors and  
thicknesses



acrylic paint,  
sponges, brush

## Let's start by making a cat head focal bead

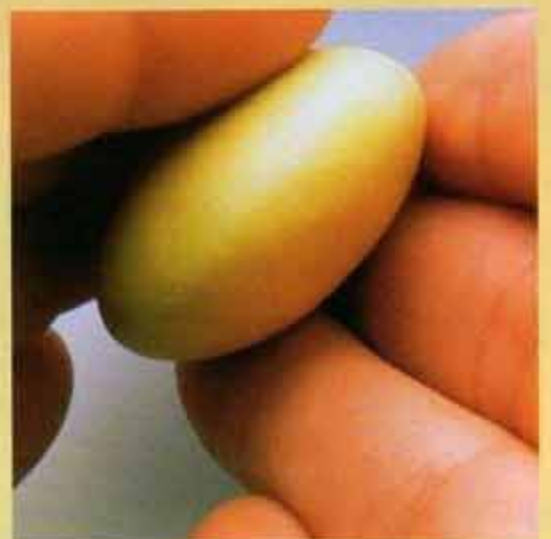
It's fun, simple and there are lots of variations, so it'll be a little while before you get tired of making them. It's also a great starting place because the other cat projects in this book will all have heads, so a pretty logical place to begin, don't you think?

Let me point out at the beginning that it's not the purpose of this book to go for strict accuracy, but rather "stylized realism" (which means it doesn't have to look **exactly** like the real thing). I think it's a fun style -- there's more spontaneity, room for expression - more fun! We need to know how the real thing looks, of course, in order to "stylize" it, but then there's room to branch out - like a lavender-colored kitty, or a leopard with flowers instead of spots.



Ok, let's begin as always by mixing up our clays. Obviously, your cat's head can be any color you want - I'm going to start with a creamy-colored cat which will give you the basics. Speaking of basics, I'm going to assume you have played with polymer clay a little - but if you haven't, or you need a little refreshing - go to the back of the book for a polymer clay overview, I'll wait. Hummm mmmm hummmmidity hummm... Ok, you're back. The clays I'm using are white, ecru, gold and burnt umber. Condition them in the usual way. This cat's head will be as big around as a 50-cent piece (you remember those -- a little bigger than a quarter). You can make yours smaller of course, but I think it's good to learn a little larger and make the next ones smaller (less stuff to have to think about all at once). The cat's face here is just ecru, but it also looks great to mix ecru and gold together - you'll need a ball about the size of boiled egg yolk.

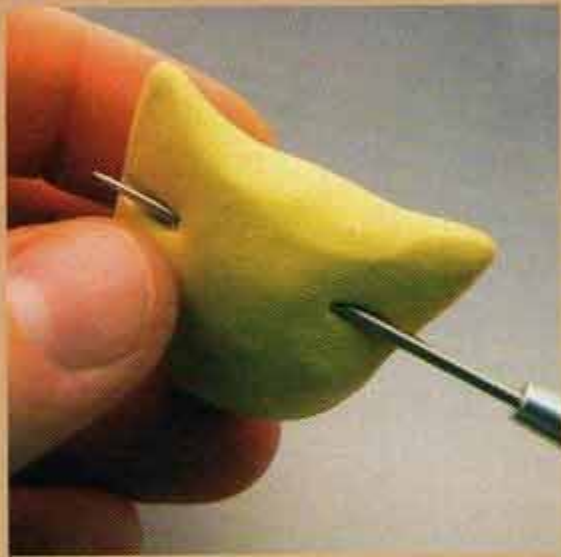
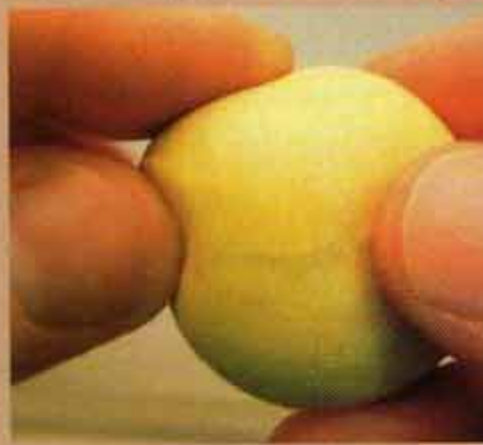
Set a little of that clay aside for some other details that we'll be adding later (a grape-sized wad will do it). Now roll the head clay into a ball. Flatten the ball slightly in your hands - it should be a little thicker in the middle than it is on the outside edges.





Let's pinch the ears out of this clay oval, instead of adding them afterwards because it's more cute, more stylized (although you can do it either way - I'll show you later.)

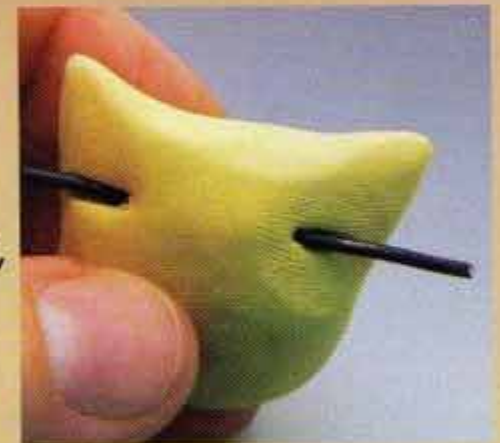
Pinch an ear out gently by pulling and shaping the clay into a point (like an ice cream cone, only short and stubby.) Now flatten that ear nub just a bit between your fingers (flat side facing forward). Pinch out the other ear too.



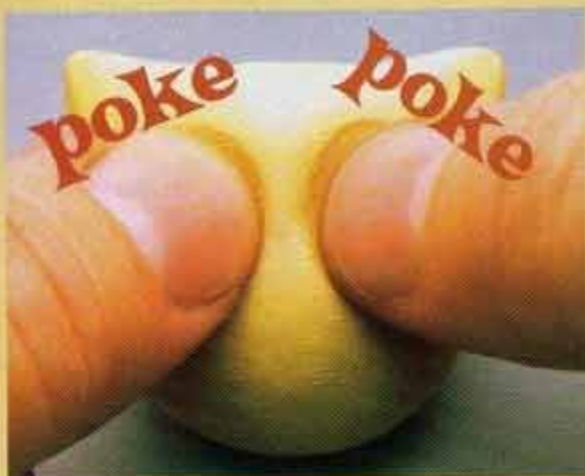
Before you get any farther, let's add the wire that will hold open a channel for stringing later. If we do this now, we don't risk smooshing all your hard work by trying to add it at the end! Start by pulling the ears forward just a little towards the front. Use your needle tool to poke a hole through the back, just below the ears - it should be parallel with the top of the head and the poke should start and end a little bit in from the edge to be better hidden from view. Get the hole as close to the top of

the head as you can so it will hang well (no flopping forward!)

Pull the needle tool out gently, and insert a little snippet of thicker wire into the hole (16 gauge). It should be long enough to stick out from both sides of the head (Frankenstein's cat!) Keep this in during the entire sculpting and baking process, and remove it after it's cooled completely. (See the back section, for the details.)



I took the wire out for the rest of these step-by-step pictures so it wouldn't be too distracting - but you keep your wire in, ok.



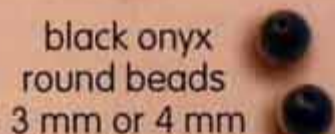
On to the fun stuff. Eyes! First let's make the eye socket areas - this helps define the face. Use your thumbs (or knuckles if you're one of those lovely-manicured-long-nails kind of gals) and press in with both thumbs/knuckles to create indentations in the clay.

# I'M LOOKING AT YOU

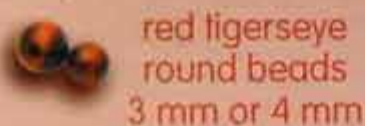
## GOOD EYES...



malachite beads & cabs



black onyx round beads  
3 mm or 4 mm



red tigerseye round beads  
3 mm or 4 mm



crystal bicone beads



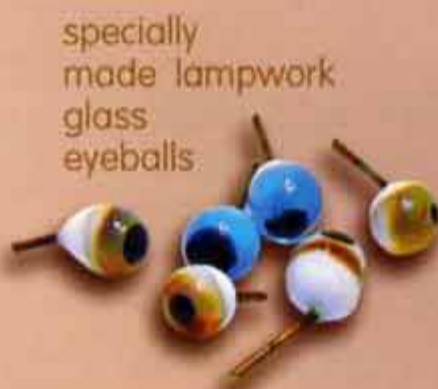
polymer clay "eye" cane



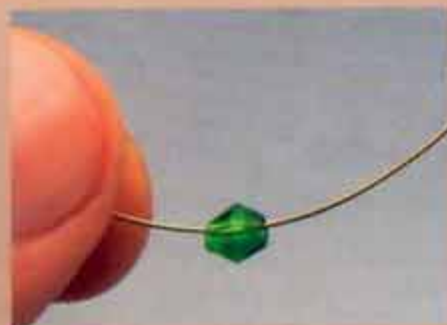
Venetian glass beads with foil interior



glass catseye beads



specially made lampwork glass eyeballs



dark green bicone crystal bead



light colored or opalized beads



corn nuts

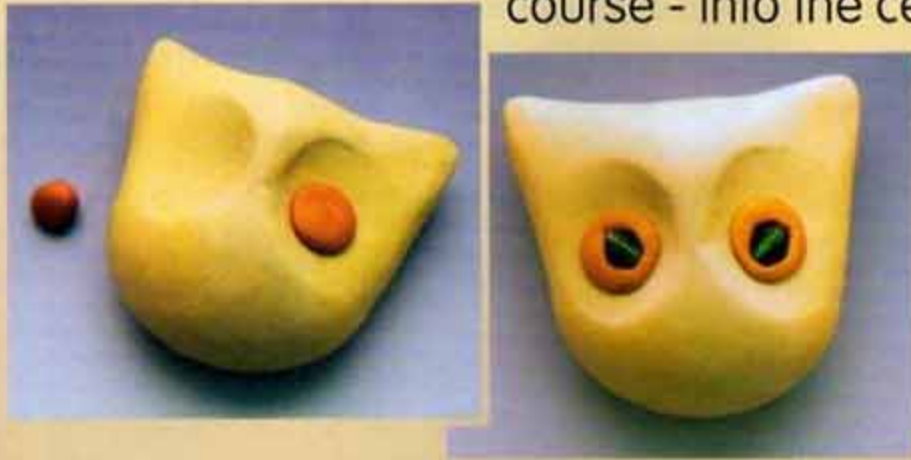
Let's make the eyes & give the cat some personality already! The cat's eyes will be beads because they add a nice sparkle.

The beads have to be wired in. Oh, you know why! If we just stuck a bead of glass or other shiny, polished material into the clay, it very likely won't stay in once the clay is cooked and hardened - pop! out go the eyeballs. Nobody wants that. So I like to use wire to help give the clay something to grab - clay won't stick to wire any more than it sticks to glass beads, but the twists that we'll add to the wire will help prevent the bead escaping. And incidentally, I really suggest that you wire in every bead you add to polymer clay every time. Yes, I know it's boring and tedious, but it must be done. Like the dishes, and the laundry. Hmmmm, I don't really do those every time as I should, so bad example, but wire the beads every time anyway!

Start by snipping a small piece of 28 gauge craft wire - about an inch or two will do - and thread on the bead you'll use for the eye. Ok, now hold the bead and pull the wires up, parallel to each other. Hold the wires with your pliers about half an inch away from the bead, and twirl the bead with your fingers until the wire twists firmly up to the base of the bead. Oops, not that firmly. Well, if the wire snaps, just do it again, Hercules, but not so much strength this time! Hee hee. Ok, now snip off the excess wire to leave a little tail of twist about a quarter of an inch long.

## ...and NOT SO GOOD EYES

You can press the wired beads into the face right now, or howzabout we add another little fun detail. (more fun is better than less fun.) Now, let's make some color to go under the eyes. Start with a little ball of clay - usually slightly darker than the face color - I'm using gold clay. Press the balls of clay directly into the center of the eye socket areas - like little face pancakes. Now press the eye beads - wire side first, of course - into the center of the pancakes. Press

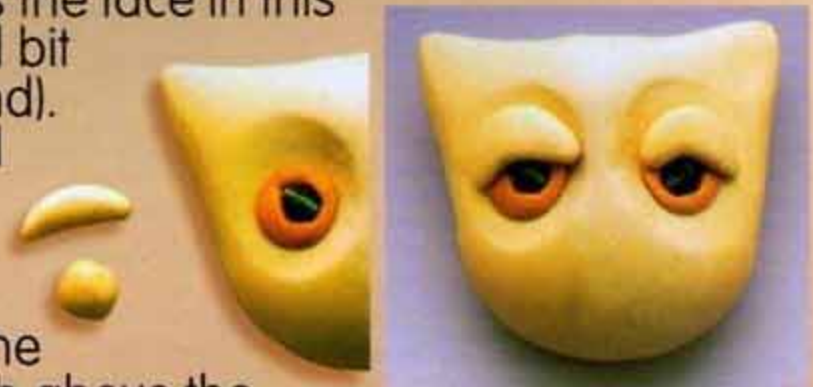


them in good - the bead should be embedded into the clay - if you're lucky, it will be enough to hide the wires. If you used bi-cone beads like these, angle both of the beads towards the center of the face since there is a visible lighter area where the wire is inside the bead, and you

want the eyes to look matching (do this with any bead that is other than round - make 'em match, like a mirror image).

These eyes are fine the way they are - perky cat! But you may want eyelids for that nonchalant cat, or that slightly sleepy cat or that plotting-something-but-trying-to-look-innocent cat. Eyelids make expressions, so placement is important (they are also good for hiding eye bead wires that just won't cooperate, so if you are putting in the eye beads and you can tell that a wire will show, twist the bead before pressing it in all the way so that the wire is on the top, where it will be hidden under the eyelid). Eyelids are just a little ball of clay - same color as the face in this case - that you roll into a rice-shaped bit

(fat in the middle, pointed on each end). Bend that rice-shaped bit slightly and flatten a bit. Now put it over the eye bead, touching it a little, adjust the angle and press into place. Eyelids angled down towards the center of the face equals angry cat, eyelids too high above the eye bead equals surprised cat and eyelids angled up towards the forehead equals sad, sad cat. How's he looking?



 <p>Ooh! Can I have some kitty snack?!</p>	 <p>Why not? I've been good.</p>	 <p>Pleeeeeease? See how sad I am without kitty snack?.</p>	 <p>Grrr. Now I'm angry! Gimme some snack or I'll claw the drapes again.</p>
 <p>Well then, I'll go out in the yard and eat bugs. You'll be sorry you didn't give your poor kitty some snack.</p>	 <p>Oh, so now you ARE gonna give me snack?</p>	 <p>Well, now I don't care. But I'll have some anyway.</p>	 <p>Blech! I don't like this flavor.</p>

**express yourself**

Now on to the cheeks and chin. Oooh, so easy! For these all you need is three little balls of clay (they can be all the same size). I chose white clay for a cute contrast. Chin goes centered on the bottom of the face, and the two cheeks touch the chin and touch each other right

above. Press together and press gently but firmly on to the face to connect. Ok, now make the shape for the bridge of the nose. Use the same color clay as the head, and roll out a longish teardrop shape.



Place the rounded end of the nose bridge touching the top of the cheeks (there will be a little gap, that's ok). The pointy end should extend past the eyes and onto the forehead. Press it on all over, and flatten it a bit as you do, especially press down flat on the forehead part.



Now the nose. I chose brown here, but he (she?) would look cute with a pink nose, too.

For the nose, start with a little ball of clay, roll it into an oval

and place that on your fingertip. With your other finger, and thumb, pinch the oval into a triangle shape, and flatten that a bit. Instant cat nose!



Place the nose with the point of the triangle centered in between the cheeks. The nose should cover that gap between the nose bridge and the cheeks. Press it on and check the sides of the face to make sure there are no gaps between the clay bits (press down a little if there are.) How does that look?

Ok, all the steps are done, it's time for the little details that really add the life to the critter!

Let's give his ear nubs some detail by making them look a little more real (but still stylized of course!) Use a dowel tool and press the pointy part into the tip of the ear. Roll it from side to side to create an ear groove.



You can add a bit of pink clay to the inner ear to get that cute little seashell look some cat ears have. Start with a tiny teardrop of pink clay, lay it in the ear groove with the pointy part of the clay in the pointy part of the ear, and press it in and flatten with the dowel tool. You can gently pull the clay towards the head to blend it out slightly to make a more subtle edge.



Now it's time to use that same blending trick to make your cat a bit more furry. Let's start with that nose bridge clay where it's pressed into the forehead - it doesn't really look finished, does it? Use a dowel tool (or my favorite wooden sculpting tool) to pull the clay from the nose bridge upwards onto the clay of the head. Use firm strokes, but with a gentle touch to pull the clay. The trick is to use the top layer of clay and let the strokes be fanned out a bit, like real fur would do. If your clay is stiff, this will be more difficult - more strokes will be necessary, but you can do it. You should use short strokes and work one layer thickly over another for convincing fur (otherwise it just looks like random scratching). After you fur the nose bridge, you can blend the edges of the eyelids. Start closest to the nose, and blend up and around, pulling the furry strokes like rays of the sun. Go around the eyelid, all the way to where the gold color of the eye pancakes begin. Let's blend in that color too! (He didn't really want face pancakes, you know.) Again start closest to the nose and work the strokes down and out, towards the eyelids. Now look it over and decide where else you'd like the furry details to be.



His mouth is fine the way it is of course, but you can add a bit of a "mrowr" by poking the tip of a dowel tool into the top of the chin, right below the cheeks. Twist the dowel tool to help it come out easily. Now give him a bit of a lip to that mouth (and add the look of chin fur at the same time) by pressing in some furry lines under the mouth hole.



His cheeks look a little bald, don't they? They need whiskers, or at least the hint of whiskers. Poke little dots in the cheeks for the minimalist look (especially good for any male cats). The dots look best in rows (it's how the real cats do it -- go check out your nearest kitty, you'll see!)



Now you can add actual whiskers (well, not actual whiskers, cuz then you'd have to pluck them out of an actual cat, and I'm no expert, but I'll bet they don't like that). I recommend using beading wire -- a flexible cable that gives just the right amount of bounce, and allows you to wear the bead without fear of getting poked all the time! There are several brands, that come in various thicknesses and colors (I'm using Beadalon brand wire here). Use thicker cable for your stiffer, male cat whiskers, and thinner wire for the longer, flouncy-er female cat whiskers. Also you can choose gold, silver or other fun colors.



Snip off at least six pieces of cable (three for each cheek!) and push them into the clay at the angle you'd like - forward and curious, or back and relaxed. I like to use needle-nose tweezers to help guide them in, and a little teeny drop of liquid clay will make sure they stay put (you can put the drop on the end of the cable, or on the surface of the cheek, sealing in the cable - both ways work).



One last thing, if you find you want to add something (let's say, for instance, that you got all done and then decided that white eyelids would be way more jazzy than those boring tan ones), you can! Place the clay where you want it and press it in, then use the dowel or wooden sculpting tool to blend the clay in, making the lines look like fur.



And the kitty face is done! Bake, cool and remove the wire for the stringing channel - all done!

Let's make some more!

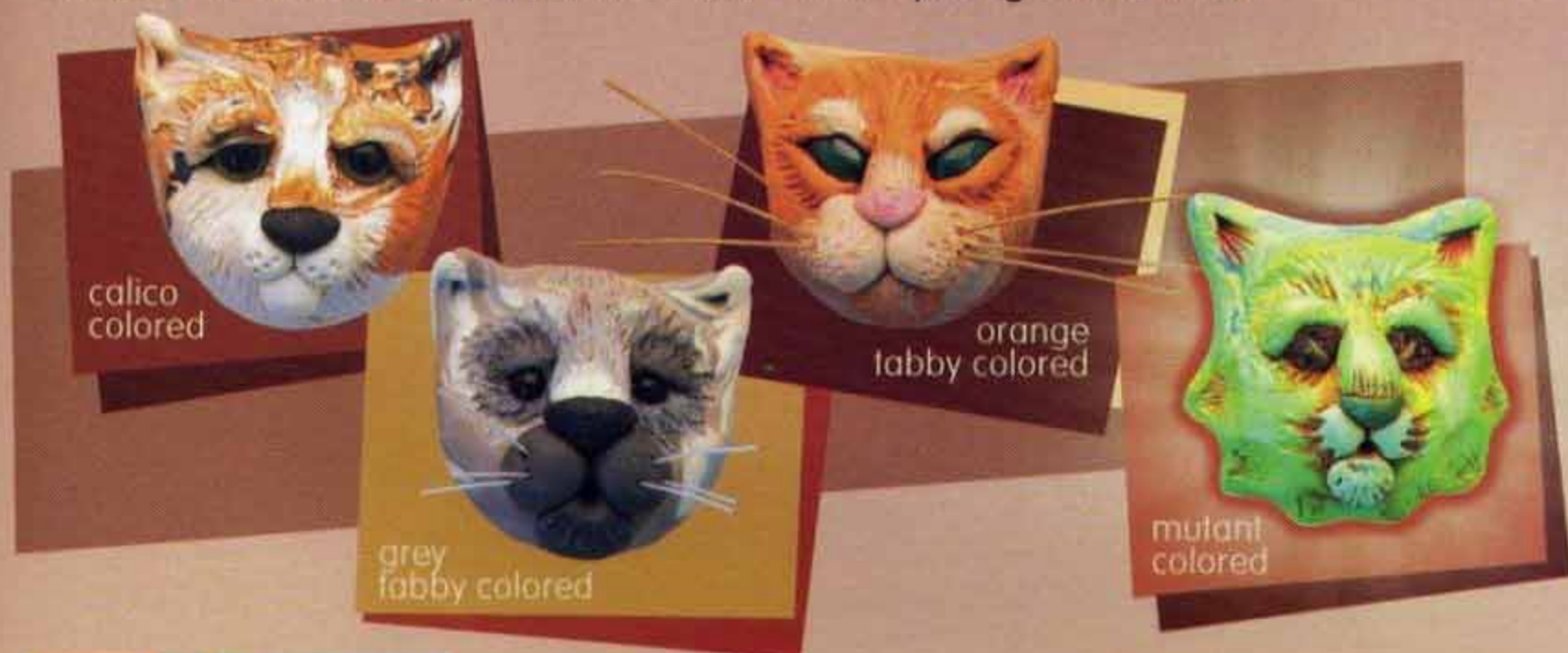


Here's what he looks like with a patina added and a clear protective coating. How-tos on these steps are in the back of the book!



Needless to say, you can vary these steps slightly to get a whole litter of new kitty heads! Changes to the color mix will make variations, as will changes to the size and placement of eyes, nose and cheeks. Whether or not you add whiskers, or how long or stubby the whiskers are also change the look of your cat head bead.

For example, when changing up color mixes, you can use a combo of orange, black, white, copper and gold clays to make a yummy calico color mix. Silver, white, burnt umber and a touch of black make a nice grey tabby color. Copper, gold, white and ecru make an orange tabby color. Fluorescent yellow and fluorescent green and turquoise make a radioactive cat - well, you get the idea!



1. starting clay colors
2. first pass through the pasta machine
3. rip and reposition the colors
4. smash smaller and flatten and back into the pasta machine
5. after one or two passes, splotchy looking, like this
6. make a ball of the clay with the mix, or...
- 7... run the clay mix through the pasta machine a few more times so colors will be more blended and the mix will look like this

I'm a space-filler kitty.



You can also add on clay bits to a basic cat head if you want to control the color placement a bit more. Some breeds, like Siamese cats for example, have a very distinctive coloration, and you can't just use random swirls of clay if you want to get the look right. A word of caution, though - just remember that whenever you are trying to duplicate an exact look (like trying to get your own beloved cat immortalized in a clay likeness, for instance), you will find that a quite different and more challenging task than just fooling around and having fun making random cat heads. So I suggest that you spend some time just enjoying the process before you try making a specific cat coloration - it's never good to start with some project that is so challenging you just frustrate yourself and give up. Well, that's my opinion anyway.

Ok, so let's tackle a Siamese cat (of course, I'm assuming you've made a bunch of easy heads first). Take a ball of ecru clay (or ecru and white mix) and make the head shape. Put the wire in the back as before.

Ok, now we have to blend in the distinctive browns on the face (burnt umber with just a bit of gold clay added to warm up the color). Now make very, very thin shapes of clay and add them to the face - Siamese cats have a stripe up the forehead and around the eyes and the rest of the chin is brown, too. Lay on all the shapes of brown in the correct places and press them in firmly. Now to make them seem like all part of the same cat fur, use a dowel tool, or other wooden sculpting tool and stroke the brown clay on top of the ecru clay. Smooth it in and make the look of fur at the same time. Remember your cat anatomy and blend to follow the way the hair would grow (if you don't know, entice the neighbor's cat over with some tuna and take a look- or google 'cat').



Since the ears are also brown, adding thin layers to the ears is too much of a task to even think about. Just give him an ear-ectomy and slice those ecru ones right off. (It's ok though, cuz we'll nip and tuck some nice brown ears on in their place, so he'll be good as new!)

Make the replacement ear by rolling out a teardrop shaped bit of brown clay. Use a dowel to indent an ear groove by placing the dowel point into the pointed end of the tear drop and rolling it - pivoting on the tip. See, groovy (pun intended, sorry). Make two of them, obviously.



Slice the ears off the cat's head. Wait! Don't forget to give him anesthesia! (or at least some catnip). Cut each ear off with the cutting blade at an angle.

Now, cut off the fat ends of the new brown ears at the same angles. Now stick the new ears on!



Press firmly and use the wooden tool again to blend the clays together. I like to blend the ecru into and over the brown inside the ears so there's enough ecru showing. For the rest of the ear blends, it can go either way - usually brown onto the ecru looks best.

Ok, all the hard part is over - add all the other facial details out of the brown clay as usual. Don't forget that Siamese cats' eyes are beautiful baby blue! I used a really neat lampworked glass eye for this cutie! (See the resource section at the back of the book for where to get some. Or make your own! Check out the "cat's eye cane" instructions for a how-to.)



The nose is black and the whiskers golden colored. I also dusted the eyelids, nose bridge and ear tips with some gold PearlEx powder to give him that extra rich glow!

Hey! Wannad' make a baby kitty head? All you need to do is adapt the regular steps slightly. Use big, round eyes - bigger than usual (more bigger equals more cuter!)

No eyelids (which means you've got to wire the beads right the first try and embed the beads in halfway with no wire showing! It may take a few practice tries, but you'll get it!) Wide eyed and perky looks more young and cute.

Add some fur lines around the eyes that sorta' look like they could be eyelashes. It draws attention to those big, cute, baby cat eyes.

Small cheeks and chin clustered closer to the eyes add to the youngster look. Also minimize the added nose bridge, and smooth it into the face closer to the nose - not all the way up on the forehead.

Big whiskers! They make the head look proportionately smaller.

Awww, let's go get the itty snookums a saucer of milk!



# Persian

One other cat breed worth taking a look at is the Persian cat. Like the Siamese cat, it too has a very distinctive look that can be easily made with a few variations to our standard cat head bead. The classic Persian has wide flat cheeks, big eyes, and a cute, almost bulldog nose. Oh yeah, and big fur!

Persians come in a variety of colors. I thought silky white would be good for this one - use a half and half mixture of white and pearl clay. Mix them together thoroughly. (Of course, you can choose another color!)

Start out with the same head shape with ears pinched out. Now pinch around the outside edges of the face to make the face bigger and the edge flatter - we'll turn that into big silky fur soon. Don't forget to add the wire in the back to hold open that stringing hole!



Press in eye sockets with thumbs/knuckles as usual. Now what do ya say we use some eye canes for the eyes? (See below). With a tool, press a hole in the center of each eye socket area for the eye cane eyeballs to fit into.

Put a drop of liquid clay in the hole to grab the cooked eyeballs (euuuw, that doesn't sound good, does it?) and position them in the holes. Make sure they look like mirror images of each other in terms of angle and positioning, as much as possible. Press them in so that they embed flush with the surface (or slightly below) - you don't want a pop-eyed cat, do ya?

Now add small eyelids above to hold in the eyeball and to give a finished look. You can also add a small eyelid below (just the same as above, only reversed).

The cheeks are oval, not round, and positioned almost horizontally. Press them on firmly. The chin is round and tucks in right below the cheeks in the usual place.



## EyeCanes



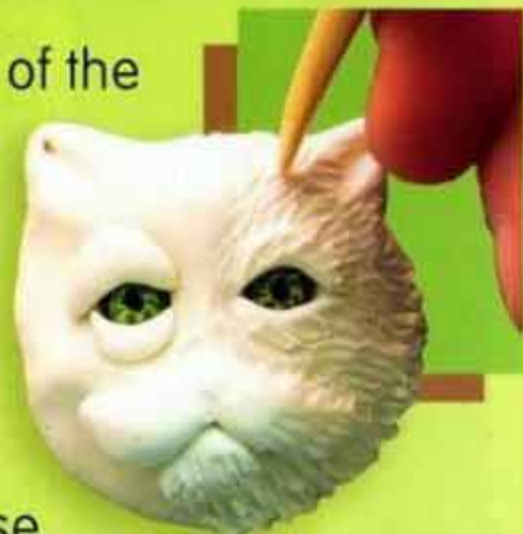
Start with two sheets of clay - a light and dark version of the same color range.

Press the two together - one on top of the other, and run through the pasta machine at the second or third from the widest setting.



Pleat the stack, back and forth, in small undulations and press together firmly. Cut in half lengthwise (right through the pleats so it cuts them into matching sets of "U"s) and set aside.

Once all the bits are in place (except for the nose), it's time to add the big fluffy fur details. Use a wooden sculpting tool to scratch the clay into short lines. Pull the lines up towards the forehead, and around the eyes like the rays of the sun, and out from the sides of the cheeks. Add lines to the bottom of the chin, continue down the rest of the way to the bottom of the face. Do the same with the sides of the face - keep going out from the cheeks and eyes. Use short, shallow strokes - just deep enough to be clearly seen, not so deep that he looks like a plowed garden of scratches!! These strokes also blend in the edges of the eyelids, cheeks and chin to get one big furry cat face!



When you're happy with the furriness, add a nose. The nose can be pink or grey or brown on black - I chose pink for maximum cuteness. Like before, make the oval and place on your fingertip, pinch the point. Now refine the shape by squeezing all three points to make more of a "T" shape - a short, squatty "T". Curve the ends of the nose "T" down a little and position it right on top of the cheeks, point down, in the usual way. Once you like the way it looks, press it into place. Don't add a nose bridge - Persians have that slightly squashed face look, (it's a cute look, though!)

For the last touch, add whiskers (use stringing cable). I suggest drooping downward - it seems to enhance that look of pampered silkiness! You can make the cable curve by scraping it on one side with a fingernail or wooden tool edge.



Add a dusting of PearlEx or other mica powder for an enhanced shimmer, if you want. Then you're all done!

Oh yeah, one little suggestion - after this piece is all baked (and a patina added if you want), you will probably want to give the eyes several layers of high gloss clear coating (Sculpey makes one). This will really give those eyes some extra depth and shine!



Roll some black clay into a log and press together with thumbs and forefingers to form a diamond shape.



Wrap the pleated clay halves around the black (cut side against the black). Make another strip of the darker of the two colors and wrap that once or twice around the outside. Press firmly together all over and trim off any clay that is too long so that you have a plug of clay. Reduce this mini-cane by squeezing and gently pulling to make the clay plug into a log and finally into a long cane.

## Ok, so what else can you do with a kitty head? I'm glad you asked.



How about dangling a cute cat from a fan pull or key chain? Simply add a wire loop to the top of the cat's head before you add all the features. Make sure you bend one end of the wire over into a fishhook to secure it (then kitty won't get pulled out while he's hanging around looking wonderful.)

And speaking of adding wire loops (we were speaking of that, weren't we?) you can add a wire loop to the back of a cat's head to make him into a button! Won't that be a conversation starter! Again, add the wire first, which makes sculpting a bit trickier, but better than squashing the face by trying to add it at the end!



Here's one more idea. Add a cat head to the top of a pencil (or a pen). Sculpt the cat around the top of the writing implement, but put a little plastic wrap on the pencil/pen first so that you can slip the kitty off to bake it. (Some pens can go into the oven, pencils sometimes do fine, other times they split - so best to just pull the kitty off.) Remember to pull out the plastic wrap before baking. After kitty is cool, reattach it with a drop of glue (hot glue from a glue gun works pretty good - it's not a perfect seal, but it usually holds up well.) Add a little ribbon bow, of course!



With a sharp blade, cut the cane in half (since this is a quickie cane, it won't be as perfect as a "real" cane, so cutting in the middle will usually show you the cleanest version of the design). Now cut an eighth inch (or slightly thicker) slice. With fingertip, press all around the edge of one side of the slice to turn in into a half circle dome shape. Make a matching one. Bake in a 250° -275°F oven for about 10 minutes to firm up. Now you've got eyes!



**Well, that's enough cat heads,  
let's give one of 'em a body already!**



This full body cat will be sculptural - a little large for a bead - but you can always make it a little smaller if you want to create a focal bead! (I'll clue you in to when and where to add the wire for the beading hole as we go along.)

There are several ways to make it. First is to use a completed cat head and add it to the body - this works whether the head is already baked or not. Or you can just make the head shape (oval with ears), attach that to the body, and wait til the very end to add all the facial details. For this one, I'll use an already completed and baked kitty head.

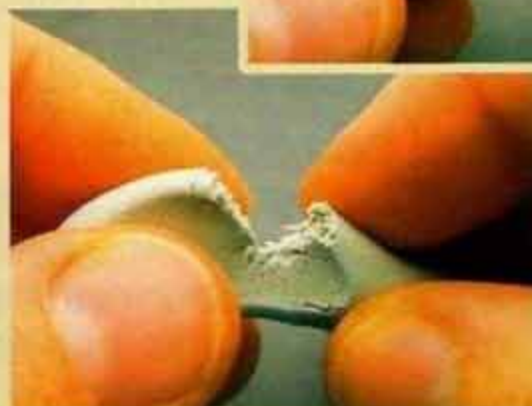


Start by making an oval of clay of the same color (or color blend) as the head - about one and a half times as much clay as the head for a little kitty (or about twice as much clay for an adult cat).

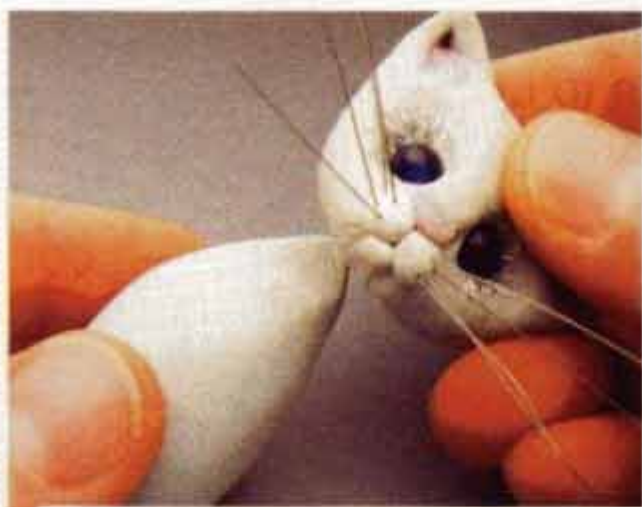


Pinch one end of the oval into a tapered point (this will be the neck, and attach to the back of the head.) At the other end, squeeze about a third of the way down to separate the clay of the body from what will become the clay of the tail. Squeeze all the way around the clay so that you make a smooth flowing indentation between the body and the soon-to-be-tail blob.

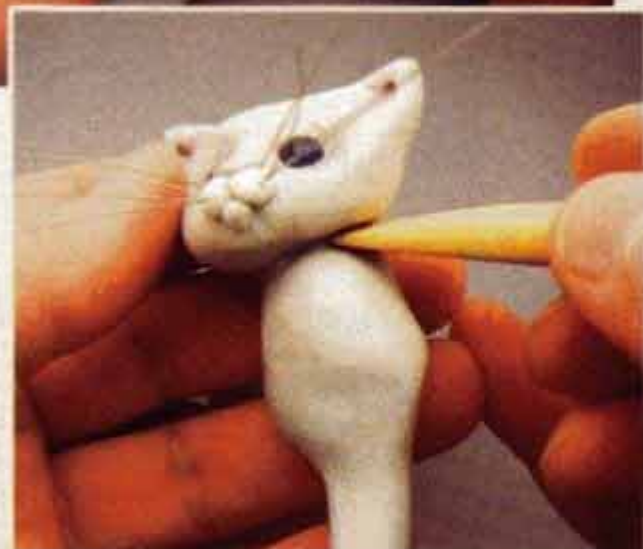
Now elongate that blob into a tail by evenly squeezing and manipulating the clay into a long snakey tail - the tail can have a pointed end or a rounded end. If the tail starts getting too long for the cat, just pinch off the excess clay from the end of the tail (wouldn't it be nice if we could just pinch off our excess tail that easily?)



Time to add the head. If you choose to add the unfinished head shape, that's the easiest - just flatten the tapered neck end of the body and press it onto the back of the head. If you're attaching a completed but uncooked head, do the same, but be careful not to smoosh any facial details. If you're adding a baked head, that's easy too (because of course you can rebake polymer clay multiple times with no problem! It's a good way to firm up the features to protect them from damage, but still continue on with your claying! See the "overview of polymer clay" page in the back for more



details). First use a little LTS (Liquid Translucent Sculpey -- liquid clay) and gloop it onto the back of the baked head. Now press on the tapered neck clay and smooth it onto the baked clay. Use more liquid clay as needed to make sure the new clay adheres to the baked clay. Whichever head you used, the next step is to make sure the clay of the neck is



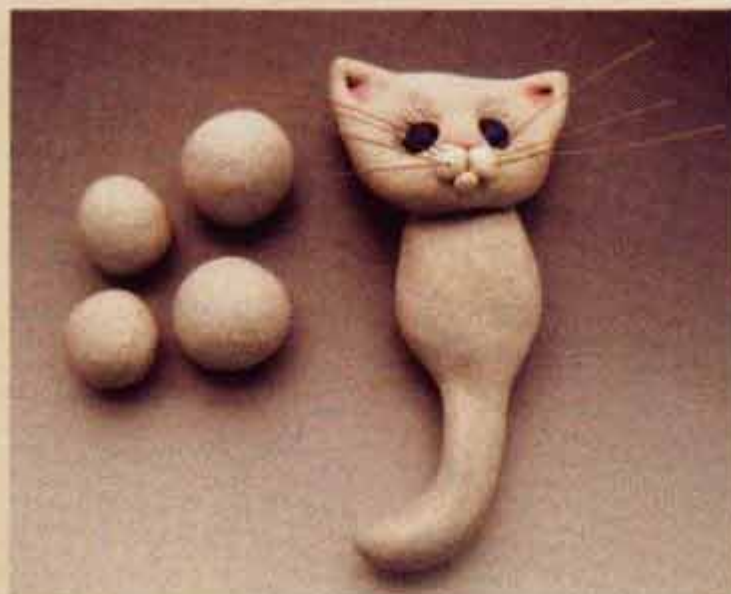
smoothed onto the head all around. Use a wooden sculpting tool (use more liquid clay on the baked head).

If you're making a focal bead out of this kitty, now is a good time to add the wire to hold open the stringing hole. It's always good to add it as close to the beginning of a piece as possible - less chance of smooshing any details.

Use a needle tool to make the hole, remove and insert the snippet of thicker wire. The best place to add the hole is right below the neck, in the upper shoulder area so kitty will hang straight up and down. Poke the needle tool through a good thickness of clay and keep it towards the back of the cat to minimize how much will be seen. Pull out the tool and insert the wire, of course.

When you're happy with the head attachment, set the kitty down on your work surface, and if needed, prop up his head with a rolled up slip of paper or some tissue (you know, good ol' toilet paper works great anytime you want to prop up any area of a sculpture - it goes right into the oven, too, with no problems!)

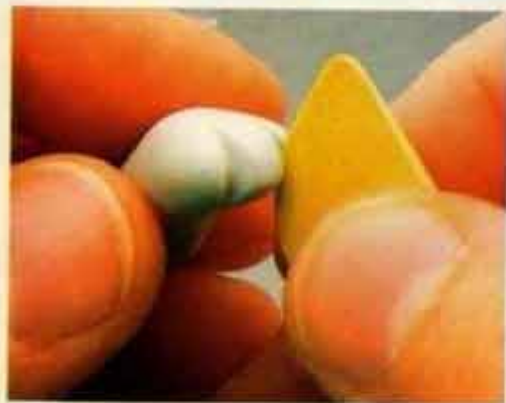
Now roll out some balls of clay for the legs - two front and two back, of course. Back legs need just a bit more clay than front legs. Shape the balls into logs, and let's start -- each leg will be made the same way, so just repeat the next steps with each of the leg logs!



First make sure that one end - the end that will be the paw - is rounded and free of creases or other yuckiness. Now flatten that end just a bit with your fingers. To make the toes, press the edge of a tool into the front of the rounded, flattened end (I'm using my favorite wooden tool with one end that is like a butter knife). I find that a nice curving motion, rocking the tool from bottom to top works beautifully to make a soft indentation into the clay. You'll make three indentations to create four toes. I know real cats have more than four toes, but one less digit just looks better for some reason -- just like cartoon characters. (Notice next time you watch cartoons - most characters have four fingers. Strange but true.)



Well, cartoon trivia aside, let's make the two smaller limbs into front paws. Squeeze all around the log just a bit behind the toes to create a wrist - it doesn't need much squeezing, just a slight indentation all around will do the trick. Don't worry at this point if the arms seem longer than they should be, we'll fix that later.



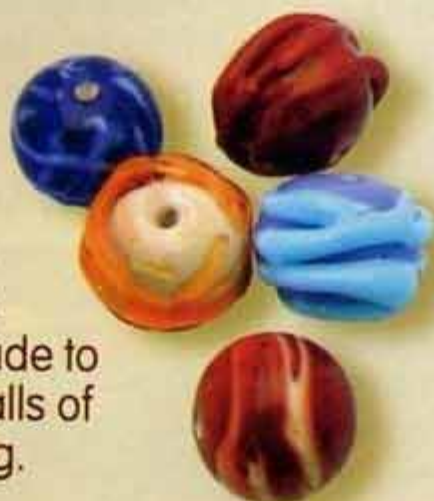
Before we continue, let's make a little something for kitty to play with - how about a ball of string? Yeah, kitty will like that. For about two minutes anyway, then she'll jump up in the air, run around the room, stop and start licking a paw and give you that look - "What? I'm not doing anything. "What are you looking at?" Cats are crazy.



A good choice for a ball is a round glass bead. This is a fun one with a stringing pattern on it - just the thing! But any round, large glass bead can look wonderful. Or you can make a ball of yarn out of polymer.



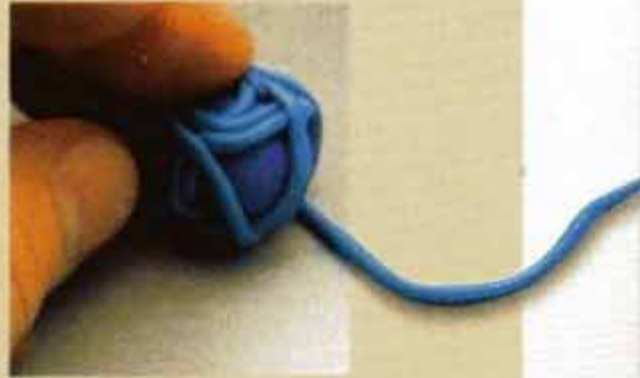
These glass beads were specially made to resemble balls of yarn or string.



Here's how to make a polymer clay ball of yarn for your cat to enjoy playing with (ok, you know that I know that these are just clay sculptures, right - I don't think they're alive - I'm not nuts. And neither am I.)



First roll a little ball of clay. Now roll out a long, teeny tiny snake of clay. Reeeally long.



Roll the ball of clay over the snake, changing direction and angle so that the "yarn" wraps up this way and that, crossing over itself like a

real ball of yarn would. Make more snakes of clay if you need to.



Flatten the finished wad just a bit by rolling it gently in the palms of your hands to press all the clay snakes firmly together.

All done! Let your kitty enjoy. And don't forget to give him a snack too, if he's been a good widdle kitty. Yes you are, yes you are, snookums....



If you use the glass bead as a ball, wire it up in the usual way, but since it is a larger and heavier piece, bend a little fishhook in the end of the wire to help it really grab into the clay and stay put. Jam the end of the wire straight into kitty's chest (don't worry, she doesn't mind - she's tough) and press the bead into the clay just a little. Make sure the bead's holes are facing toward the cat's shoulders, so



we can cover them up with the paws. Take one of the smaller front paws/arms and let's give it an elbow. First, hold the arm up to kitty at the shoulder area to see if the length is good - if it's too long (which is usually the way it works out), pinch off some of the excess and smooth the ragged edge, or cut it off and smooth the cut edge - either way, do some smoothing! Press that edge down a bit to flatten (it helps when attaching to the body.)

Now bend the arm at the halfway point for an elbow. Press each arm onto the shoulder firmly. Use the paws to cover the open end of the bead. The clay of the paws won't permanently adhere to the glass bead, but they will stay nicely if they're pressed up against the glass and also pressed into the clay body, or other parts of the cat.

if you use the polymer yarn ball, just press it into the chest, and press on the paw





You can leave the arms pressed on, or you can smooth the edges of the arm attachment into the clay of the body for a smoother look.



Ok, the arms are on. She looks like a tadpole kitten. Time for the back legs to make her look like a cat! (Unless you like tadpole kittens.)

The back legs have different bends, on account of cat anatomy - you do have to get that right or your kitty will look a little mutant. Start with an ankle. Same place as the wrist we did on the front legs, but press more firmly, make more of an indentation so we can bend the leg at a right angle at that spot. Use a dowel tool if needed to smooth the crease at the bend.



Again, hold the leg to the body and make sure of the length - pinch or cut off any extra if needed.

Now there's also a knee bend, which is a soft bend like the elbow was. Attach these to the hip (the hips are at the sides, just before you run out of cat body!) Leave them pressed in, or smooth the clays together - whichever you did for the arms, do again!



Position the legs however you like, but I think a nice way is up and playful, cradling the ball - cute, don't you think?

Well, there's one more thing you can do if you want to - add some foot pads to the bottom of the feet since they're up in the air like that. They are just little dots of clay (they can be pink like these, or darker - usually a shade or two darker than the color of the cat will work well). Place a small ball of clay on the underside of the foot, just below each toe and one larger ball in the center of the heel. Flatten each. Ta dah! Perfecto!



Adjust the tail for optimum cuteness and look her all over - prop up any areas that you think might be adversely affected by gravity and could possibly droop, drop or flop in the oven (again, toilet paper works great, or use rolls of paper - whatever works for you.)

Bake as usual. Once cool, remove the wire (if you used it), add patina and/or clear coating if you want to.



Wasn't that fun?  
Yes, yes it was.

Now of course you can make more cats in different poses with the same steps - just vary how you position the head and body. The arms and legs attach in the same place, and bend in the same spots - just add more or less bend to get the look you want. Here's some ideas of variations to get your creative juices flowing!



The stringing hole is through his paws so he can just hang around.



Look how cute and little you can make him!  
...just think small.



For this one, instead of being on his back, he's on all fours - but all the steps are the same. The silk ribbon adds a touch of fun and color!

are you ready?  
here come



## lump cats!

So named because they start with a lump of clay and when they're finished, they're still lumps -- but really cute lumps! Can anything called "lump" really be worthwhile, you may well ask?

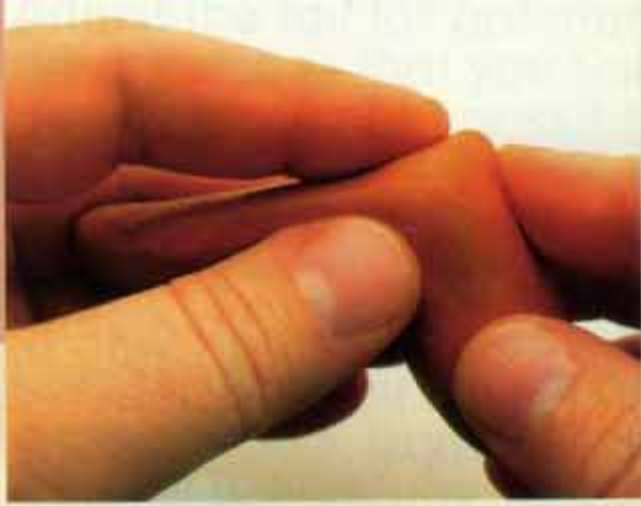
Well, let me tell you a little story (ok, it's more of an anecdote than a story, or maybe it's more of an illustrative example, hmmm). I went to Maryland once and had a fun weekend with a cool group of polymer clay gals (they weren't made out of polymer clay, of course, they were polymer clay artisans) and we went out to dinner together after a day of claying. On the menu was one of Maryland's most famous culinary delights: lump crab cake. Now normally, I don't voluntarily choose to order anything with the word "lump" in it as a food choice, but the local gals were insistent that "lump crab cakes" were delicious and that I'd love them. Maryland is to crab what San Francisco is to sourdough - so I ordered it and determined to take at least a little bite, not to be rude. The dishes were brought and it was indeed a lump. Not a pretty lump, no garnish of parsley or artful dollop of sauce to drown it in. Just a lumpy lump all alone in the middle of the plate. Well, if you've had Maryland crab, you know the rest - delicious! Really, really delicious. I think they call it a lump and make it a lump so the rest of the country won't know how wonderful they are and flock to Maryland and take them all.

So, now you should be thoroughly optimistic about how wonderful a lump cat can be. Especially with tartar sauce. Just kidding, cat's go better with catsup, of course. Start with a lump of clay, naturally. It can be a thoroughly blended color, or have plenty of streaks and variations of color. Your lump of clay should be about the size of an avocado pit. Pull some of the clay off so you have extra to use for facial details (you won't need much - about the size of a marble). Shape the main lump into an oval.



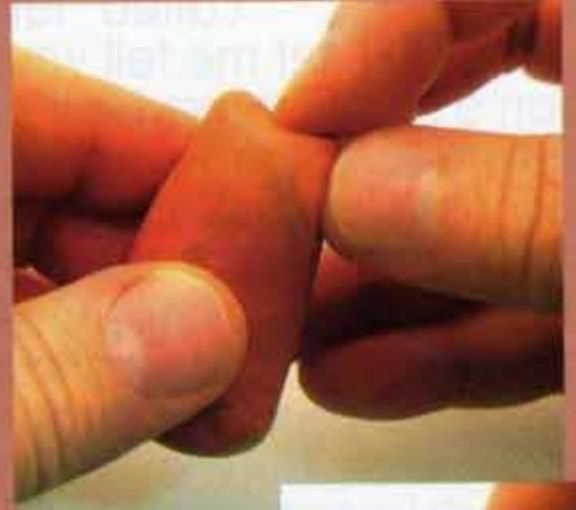
At one end, pull out a tail by squeezing and gently pulling the clay into a tail shape - just a long log that can end pointy or roundy.



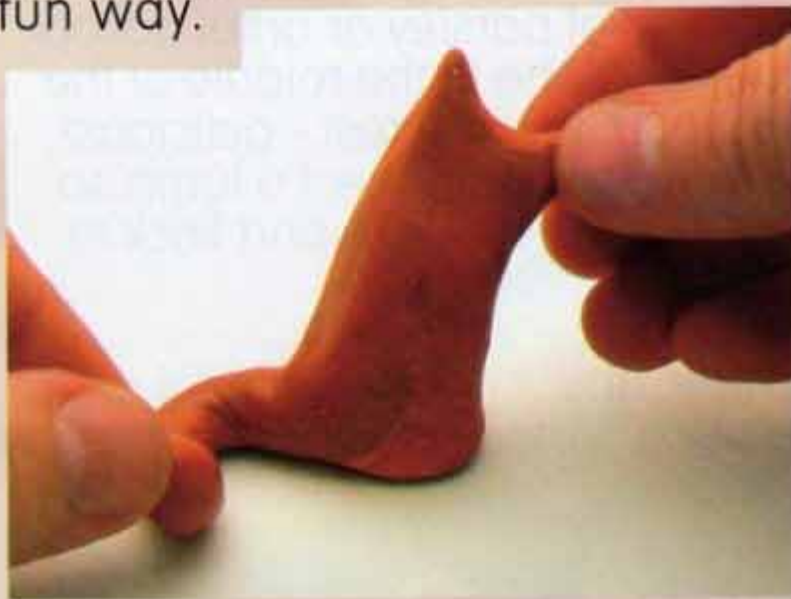


Firm up that end of the clay so that the cat will stand without tipping by pulling the opposite side of the tail into a bit of a bulge (just pinch and pull a little to make a wider bottom). Set it down on the work surface and press down a little to flatten the bottom - it should stand well (adjust the bulge until it does).

Now squeeze and gently pull the top of the lump (this will become the head) so that it tapers a bit more. Pinch out the ears on either side of the top in the same way as we did for the cat faces - pinch all around with equal pressure to make a point and then flatten it slightly.



This is essentially your lump cat - it just needs a face - so position the body, tail and head in some fun way.



Of course you can add leg nubs if you really want to - remember it's a lump, don't get too realistic, just the hint of legs are all you need (and you don't even need those!)

Just pinch a little bit to make the nub - same way as you did the ears, just not so pointy. Put him back down again to see if he still stands up, and make any adjustments if he doesn't.



Add a face! A simplified version of the faces we've already done - eye socket indentations are optional. Add the wired beads for eyes. Round balls of clay for cheeks and chin. Nose is the simple triangle pressed onto the cheeks. If you want to leave off the nose bridge, just press the top of the nose down onto the cheeks with a tool edge. Whiskers and stylish neckwear are optional.



**See, I told you lumps can  
be wonderful.**

## Chester

gowza!

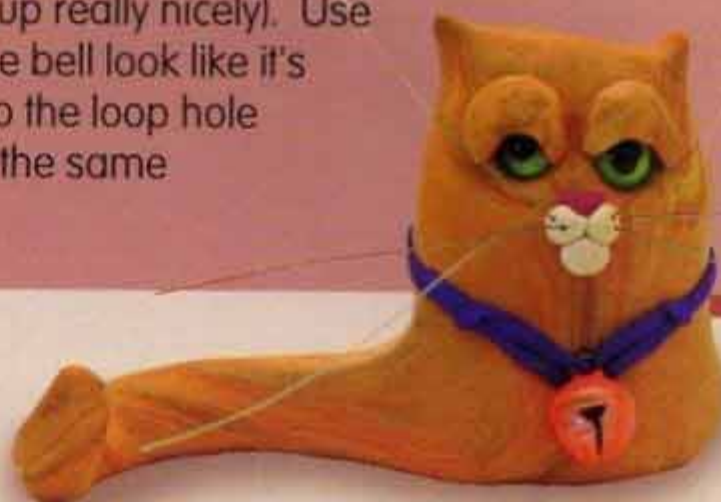


Add the chest and eye colors by adding a very thin bit of clay and blending it in with the tip of a wooden tool. Open the mouth by poking a tool into the clay and pulling down to create a bottom lip at the same time.

## Fat Tony

Wassa' matter, you ain't never  
seen a cat with a bell before?  
Fuhgedaboutit.

For the collar, wrap a thin snake of clay around the neck and press in to attach. Now wire in the little bell (it's a nifty little bead with a stringing loop at one end, so it wires up really nicely). Use more of the same snakes of clay to make the bell look like it's attached to the collar by poking one end into the loop hole (this covers the wires, too) and a little ball of the same clay to make the knot at the sides.



## Princess

hmf.



This is a variation of the coloring for a Siamese - dark clay for all the face bits. The collar stone is a faceted peridot, set in a sterling setting. Press it into the chest clay and use the ends of the snake of clay for the collar to secure the loops and hold the stone in place. Very exotic, huh?

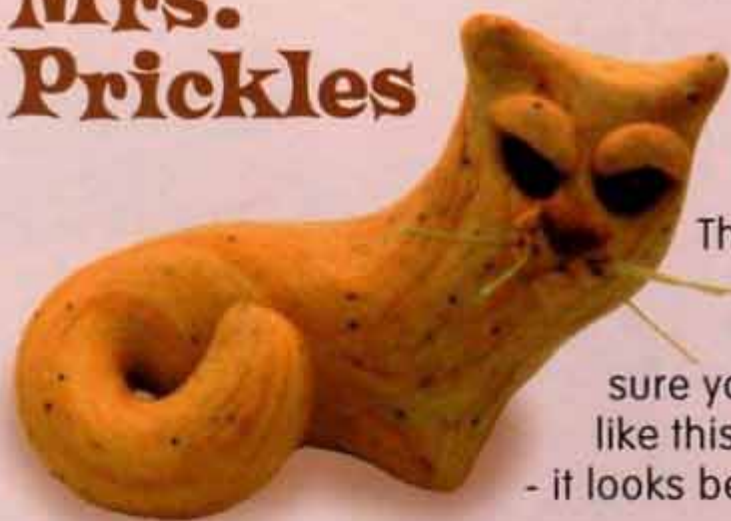
## Yowser

The color for this is silver, black and gold with lots of streaks left in! Mouth is made the same as for Chester, add a tongue by making a little teardrop of red clay, press a line down the middle with a needle tool and press it into the mouth hole with the point of the dowel tool - at the very back of the tongue.



Pppthhhblth.  
What? No, I  
haven't seen  
the canary,  
why do you  
ask?

## Mrs. Prickles



I am not amused by you children, and I will not play "tea party". Now go away before I hiss at you.

This one is more vertical and the feet nubs more pronounced. Eyes are lentil-shaped garnet beads - make sure you press in lentil beads at an angle like this - aiming towards the nose in a "v" - it looks better! Eyelids angled down add the rest of the annoyed look.

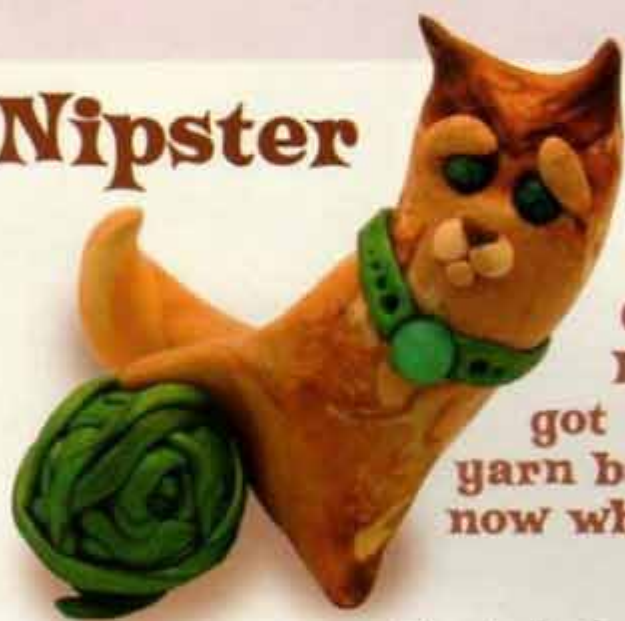
## Muffy



Cream? Is it fresh? I don't like the half and half stuff. Oh, and room temperature of course - if it's cold that bothers my delicate tongue.

This collar of beads is wired and the end twist has a little fishhook to grip it into the clay. Press the wire in at the back of the neck, out of sight!

## Nipster



Ok, I've got the yarn ball, now what?

The ball of yarn is clay and the feet nubs are pulled out just a little longer to make the grab. Jade bead in the collar, wired in and pressed deeply enough to hide the wires.

## Tweedle & Dee

These are squashier lumps with bigger eyes for maximum cuteness. Lots of stripes left in the clay. The littlest cat has the smaller facial features to make the kitten look.

Aachoo!

Gesundheit.





**ROAR!**  
**NOW ON TO SOME  
REALLY BIG CATS!**

Well,  
maybe not  
that big.



# BIG CATS!

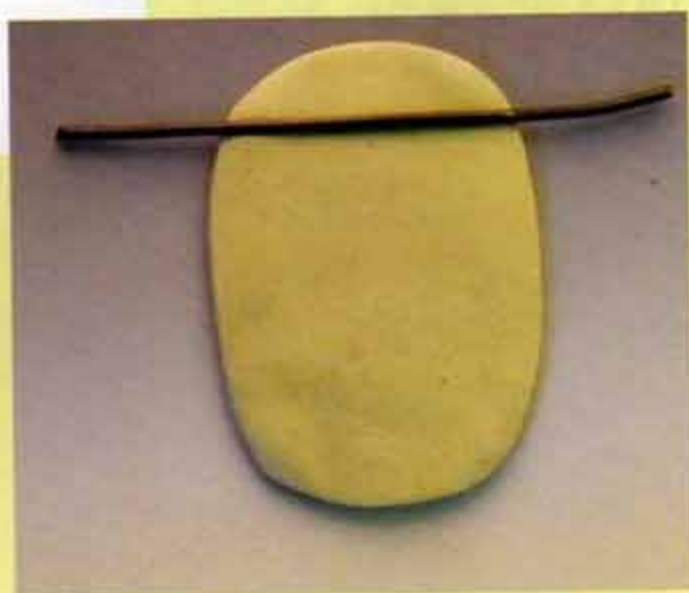
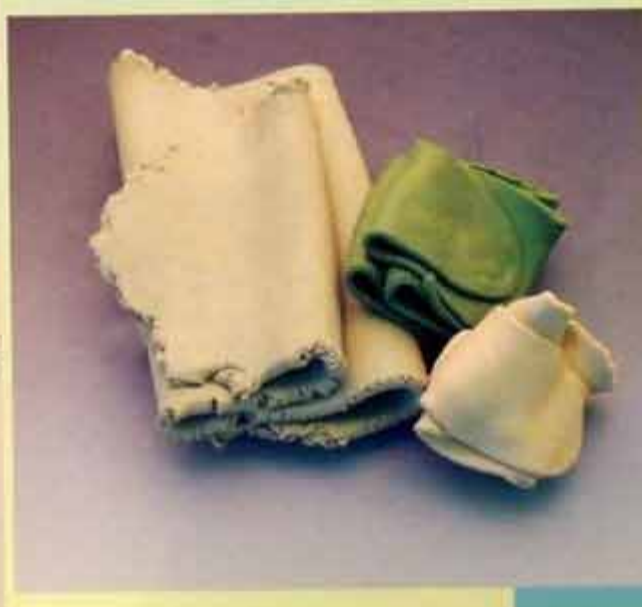


Lions,  
and tigers,  
and pumas,  
oh my!

Let's start with a lion head bead (or mini wall pieces if you prefer). These will be very similar to the kitty heads, but with the special details that lions require to look correct. Like all that lovely mane!

Start with clays - I'm going to make this one a green lion, just to shake things up a bit! Of course you can make your lion any color you're in the mood for. You will need an avocado pit-sized wad that will be used for the face, mane pad and parts of the mane. You will also need a smaller wad - oh, let's say walnut-sized - that is a little darker for under-eye coloration and more mane. Another smaller wad that is a little lighter for cheeks and chin and more mane bits will complete the clay palette. For example, this lion's face wad is ecru with a bit of green and a just a little gold mixed in. The lighter has more white added - about half and half. Then

the darker color is more green and a bit more gold mixed in. I like to do this often - the basic color and a lighter and darker variation for accents.

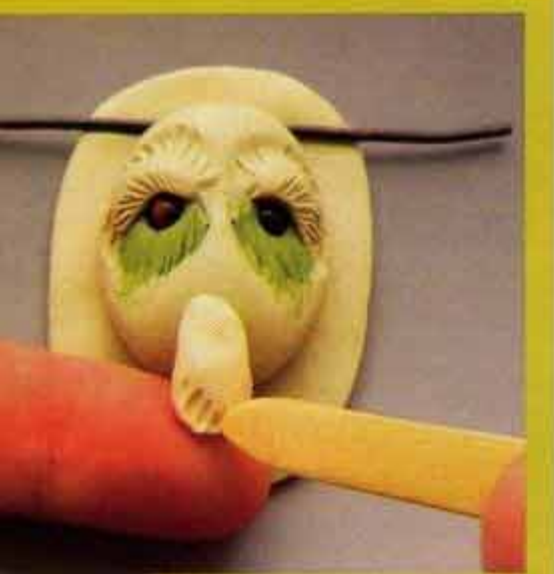
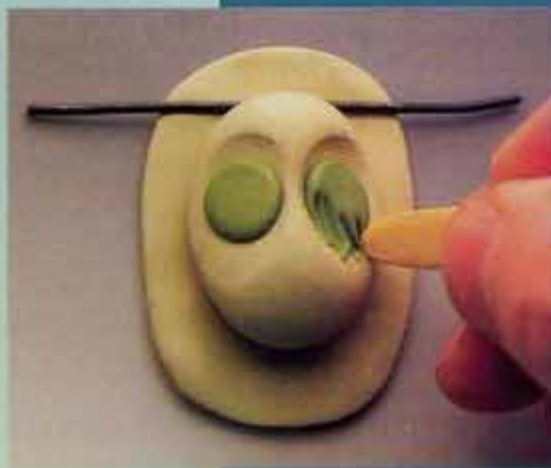
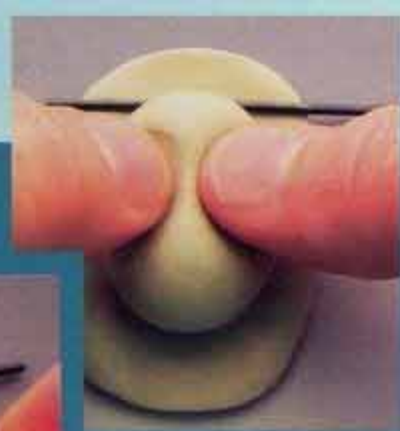


Ok, now make an oval-shaped flat pad that will help support all the mane strands - I suggest running a sheet of the face color through the pasta machine at the widest or second widest setting, then cut out an oval shape (all the mane will come to the edges of the oval, so make it the size your finished lion will be -- I suggest about 2 inches long and an inch and a half wide). Smooth all the edges a little to take away that cut look. Snip off a piece of thick wire to hold the stringing hole open - same size as for the kitty head - and lay it horizontally at the top of the oval. This will get covered up with clay as we do the mane, so don't worry if it's exposed until we get to that step.



Make a ball of clay out of the medium color, about the size of a large grape (it can be a circle, or an oval) and lay it in the center of the oval base. It doesn't have to cover the wire.

Now do the thumb-press thingy to make the eye sockets, which will also press the head shape into the base (oval). Lay in those eye pancakes - same as we did for the kitty. I used the darker color again for the pancakes. Press them down firmly to flatten. You can blend the clay with your sculpting tool to create the look of fur now if you want (you'll only need to do the bottom - all the eyelid stuff will cover the top). Now add wired beads for eyes to the center of the eye pancake - you know how!



Once the eyes are pressed in, add eyelids - the usual rice-shaped bits, curved and pressed over the eyes.

The chin is slightly different from the kitty - for starters it's bigger. And furry-er (it's a word, honest). Use the lighter clay wad to make three balls for chin and cheeks - all of them proportionately bigger than you did for the kitty. Add the chin first by making it into an oval or teardrop and pressing it onto the bottom center of the face. Now add the furry-er part by stroking with the tool downwards to make those furry lines. Support the chin with your finger so it won't bend down. Now press on the cheeks just above the chin, as usual.



triangle to elongate them. Place the point on top of the cheeks, right between the two so that it looks like a "T" with the arms horizontal. Press in the point and then bend over the two arms to curve downward a bit and then press those in, too. Add the nose bridge, press it in at the forehead, and start blending all the clays together, impressing in all those furry lines - follow the same "hair growth" pattern as the kitty - up the forehead, around the eyes, down the cheeks - as much or little as you want!

The nose is larger than kitty's too, of course - the better to smell you with my dear. Make the oval of dark color (this is burnt umber) and pinch to make the triangle. Now pinch each of the three points of the





Time for the mane attraction (pun intended, I'm afraid). You'll like this part - it's fun! Take all the bits of color you have left, roll them out into little snakes and stack up several of the colors in a cluster - now twist 'em! Fold them in half and roll together and twist again - and again and again as many times as you like - the more you fold and twist, the smaller the individual strands of color will be. (The twisting lines up all the colors

nicely and adds to the look of hair strands!) Vary the amounts of each color to change the tone of the mane strands for variety.

Take some of those strands, pinch off a small bit, and re-roll them into rice-shaped (and almost rice-sized) bits for the hairs.

You will need enough to make at least one layer under the chin, probably two - and if your face is high, or the rice-bits small, maybe even three layers. Press the rice-bits under the chin and stack up until they reach the chin.



Now take one of the twisted strands and roll it into a snake of clay with one end tapered to a soft point (about an inch or so long). Lay it in place at the side of the face, right up against the chin bits. Press into place and especially press down the non-pointy end (so that subsequent mane bits will lay flat right over it).

Repeat on the other side. The next mane pieces lay beside that first one, and again repeat in the other side of the face. Now lay a piece on top and farther up the face, all the while

curving the mane strands along the face and up towards the top of the head. Keep working up the face and on both sides at the same time, overlapping the mane strands like shingles. As you get to the top of the head, the snakes of clay can get shorter. Keep overlapping until the whole head is covered. Make more short mane bits curve down onto his forehead like bangs, too (otherwise he'll look kinda' bald and lions are touchy about that).

You should cover all of the oval base clay with the strands of the mane. If any sticks out, cover it or cut it off - whichever looks best for your piece. And don't forget to check that the mane goes all the way to the edges - look at it from the top or sides to make sure that it looks finished. Also make sure that you have completely covered over the wire.



Since all the well-dressed lions are wearing beads this season, let's add 'em! Individual beads can be wired up in the same way as you did for the eye beads and pressed into the mane anywhere it looks good (and also an effective way to cover up any problem areas where ends are showing or gaps in the clay occur).

It also looks really nifty to add long strands of beads amongst the strands of clay in the mane - they accentuate the flow of the hair and add a nice contrast in color, texture and shine. To wire up a strand of beads, start with a longer piece of wire - about 2 to 3 inches - and bend a little fishhook in one end (this will hold the wire securely into the clay). Now thread on a row of beads - at least an inch of them - snip off the excess wire and bend a fishhook into the other end. You should have about a half inch of wire exposed on either end of the row of beads.



To add the bead lineup, use needle-nose tweezers (believe me, they make this part much easier!) and press one end of the wire into the clay - between two mane strands. Now grip the wire, on the other side, holding the beads back (otherwise they keep falling forward and getting into the clay and just being a nuisance) and press the wire into the clay so that the beads get pulled down to lay flat into the clay.



You can poke the tweezers right down into the clay to make sure the wire is completely embedded. Press the bead strand into place and squeeze the clay



together to close up any hole from the tweezers. You can also add a little small snake of clay, pressed up against the

beads to cover up any hole from the tweezers. (Or hide the wire if it's still visible.) Add the strands wherever you think they will look good.

Once all the beads are added, add whiskers if you want - or if not, you can press in rows of dots on the cheek with the tip of your dowel tool where the whiskers would be. Usually two or three parallel rows looks best.

Bake as usual (details in the back of the book) and when it is done and cooled, remove the stringing hole wire by giving it a twist with the pliers and easing it out. He's grrrrreat!

Dontcha' think? Adding a patina and/or clear coating are the next steps (they are optional of course - and again, check the back for how-to!)

And here he is after baking, adding a patina and a clear coating. Nice, huh?





Blue lions are as fun as green ones! The nose is blue pearl clay mixed with black. The mane bits are asymmetrical, with the bangs sweeping in from one side - gives him a delightfully nonchalant look, huh?



Gold and copper are the clay colors for this guy. The long look in the face is made by putting the eyes higher up on the head than usual, and accentuating the long nose bridge by making it lighter than the rest of the face. Gold spacer beads are mixed into the citrine and carnelian beads embellishing his mane.

The big, fat curly mane strand adds a lot of visual interest and helps in balancing the large pearl. Make it by twisting a mane strand into a coil, then press gently to attach.



This wise, old lion has a windswept look that is achieved by putting on all the mane stands straight out from the head. The mane has several layers to create depth, with the top layer including a little rolled up "snail shell" coils at the end and pressed on top of the bottom layers - this hides any ends, and adds to the breezy look. The multiple eyelids on top and bottom of the eye create that aged look.



Malachite beads in a lentil shape are set on end for the eyes - notice they are angled at each other. The coral and carnelian disc-shaped beads at the top of the mane are wired and pressed in with the flat side showing. To hide the exposed wire, tuck another strand of mane on top of it, or brushing up against it. It's a good balance for the line-up of similar beads on the opposite side.





# TIGER TIME

Of all the big cats, tigers are the most recognizable, the most striking. That lovely orange, black and white coloration is just spectacular. So let's make one! Or the head of one, anyway, as a focal bead!

Tiger color is a mixture of orange, copper and gold clays - mostly orange, obviously (the copper and the gold just tone down the "cartoony" feel). Start the tiger head in the same way as you did for the kitty head - roll a circle of that tiger-colored clay, pinch out the ears, add the wire in the back. Just one change, though - as you pinch out the ears, soften the ends into a rounded shape, not a point. It's a tiger thing.



Next, press in the eye socket areas with your fingers, as usual. For the eye pancakes, use black clay (or a black and brown mix if you want to warm it up a bit). Press them on and then add the eyes. I used those groovy lampworked glass eyeballs in a yummy blue, although I don't think tigers actually have blue eyes (except for those white magical ones that are native to Las Vegas) but hey, the blue eyes look good, so there! Whichever eyes you choose, press them into the center of the black pancakes. At this point he'll look like a surprised pumpkin.

those white magical ones that are native to Las Vegas) but hey, the blue eyes look good, so there! Whichever eyes you choose, press them into the center of the black pancakes. At this point he'll look like a surprised pumpkin.

Let's add the eyelids next. First, black eyelids right above the eyeballs, as usual. Then white ones right over those. We'll blend all these details in as we go this time - use your wooden tools to gently scrape the clays around the eyes into the clay of the face. If your clay is hard, it will be a little more tricky, but just take your time and use short, repetitive strokes - it'll work. If your clay is soft, use a light touch and only blend the outer edge or else the clay may smear much farther over the face than you want it to. Obviously, this blending is the same process as we've used all along with these projects, but for the tiger, the stripes need to blend in a smaller space, and there's more of them, so I thought I'd mention these extra hints!





Now let's add more stripes - both black and white. I find it's very helpful to get a photo of a tiger to help you see which direction the stripes go - down the forehead and curving at the sides of the face is the usual pattern. Press on the small snakes of clay and then blend them in too.



Cheeks and chin are white, in the usual place. Keep adding stripes as needed while you go along.



The nose is a brownish pink (I mixed fuchsia, ecru and a little copper to get the right color). Make the nose in the more pronounced "T" pattern, but here's a little trick to make him more tiger-y. Before you add the nose, make a triangle-shaped flat piece out of black and lay the pink nose on top of that first - it will give it more depth and definition (and in real life, tiger's noses look like that. I don't know why).



Time to finesse the ears. Press an indentation into the ear with



the rounded end of a wooden sculpting tool. Next add a bit of the black clay to the top of the ears and blend that in. Now use just a little teeny bit of the white clay on the inside of the ears and blend it in while making the furry strokes of the ears. Just a few pulls with the tool should do it!

Ok, all that's left are the whiskers - thin ones work really well for tigers - lots of flouncy-ness! The usual baking, cooling, removing wire and patina/clear coat steps and he's ready to attract attention in a terrrrrrific necklace!



Of course there are lots of "big cats" that you can make with just simple variations to the cat heads we've already done. Here are a few, to give you some ideas about what to do.



## Leopard

Obviously, the spots are the thing that identifies this cat as a leopard. The ears are rounded, like the tigers. All the facial features are like the kitty (with big cheeks, chin and nose, of course). The spots can simply be dots of clay pressed in, or beads, or a "spot" cane (if you want to get fancy).

This leopard's spots are added to the finished head by pressing in thin slices of the spot cane and blending in all the edges. Furry lines were added on top of the spot canes, too, to make the spots seem like they are part of the fur, not added on.

This leopard's spots are pearls, wired in the same way as eye beads.



## Puma (or Mountain Lion, or Cougar)

I don't know why this particular cat species gets so many names - I suspect multiple personalities, or maybe they're aliases - he looks like a shady character. Hmmmmm.

The color for this cat is a warm brownish-grey. Use white, ecru, gold, burnt umber and black -- just a little bit of the dark clays, though.

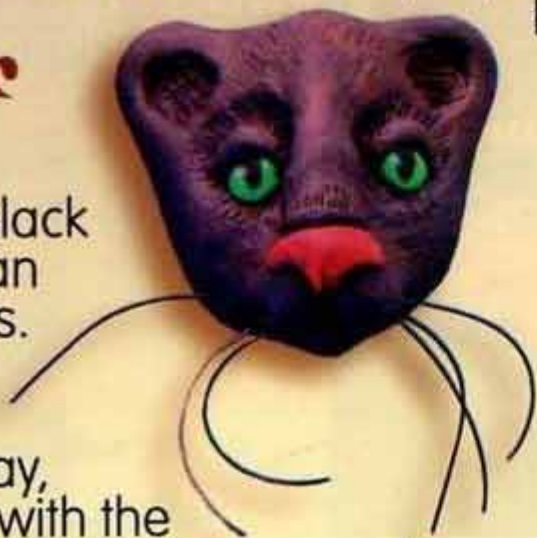
The distinguishing features of pumas are the black around the outsides of the cheeks and above the eyes. (And they have those cute pink noses, too!)

I used a greyish black clay and made two flat pancakes and put those on the face first, with the whiteish cheeks going directly on top of them. Then just blend the cheek clay into the black clay and the black clay onto the face. The blackish above the eyes are little teardrops, pressed in and blended too.

## Black Panther

This is just a leopard that's been overcooked - not really, of course. Black panthers are indeed leopards with an all black coat (and matching trousers. Ok, I'll stop now.)

These eyes are just green balls of clay, placed on the face during sculpting with the pupils added with acrylic paint after baking (you can also use a permanent marker). Add a clear coating to the eyes to make sure the added detail is not nicked in the future.



# Mane Makeover



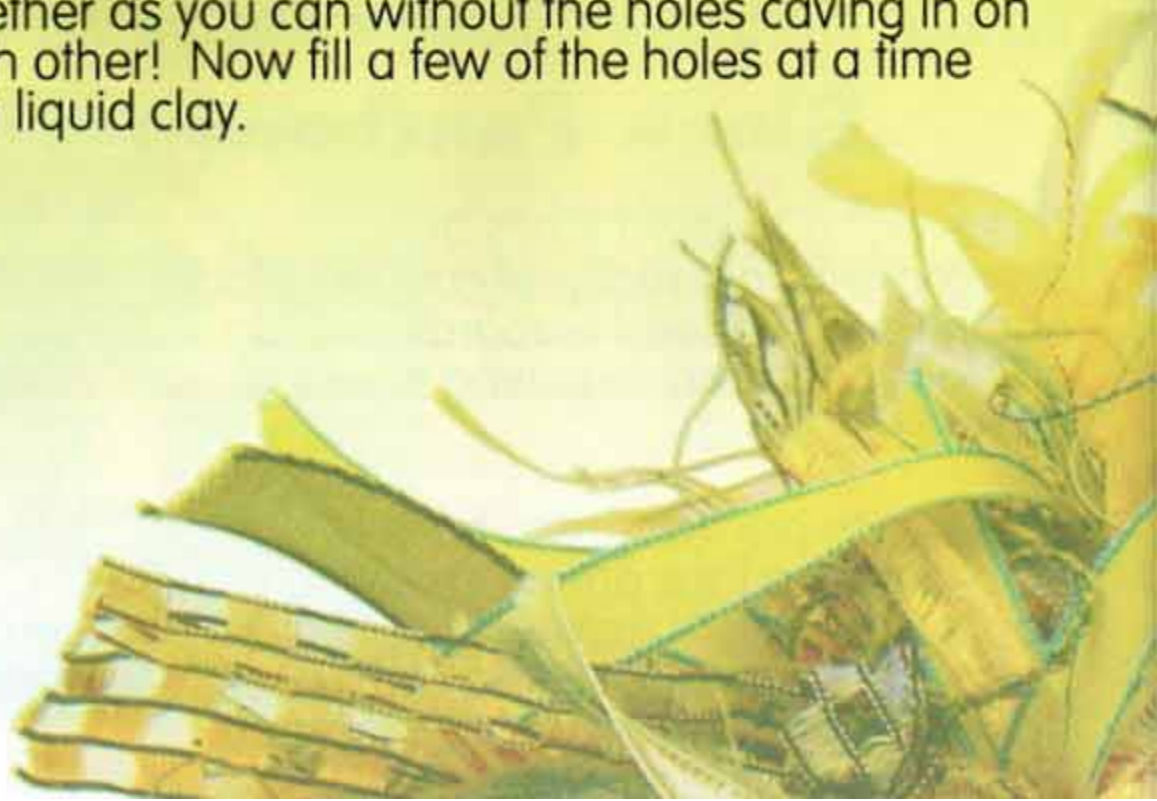
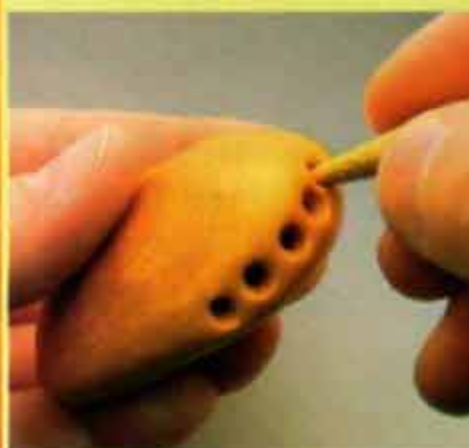
Since lion heads are such fun to do, let's play with another version - this is intended as a larger piece, perfect for a wall hanging in your jungle room (you've got one of those, right?)

Okay, we did a regular clay mane, but now it's time for a mane makeover. We'll add ribbons to the sculpting process & bake 'em right in.

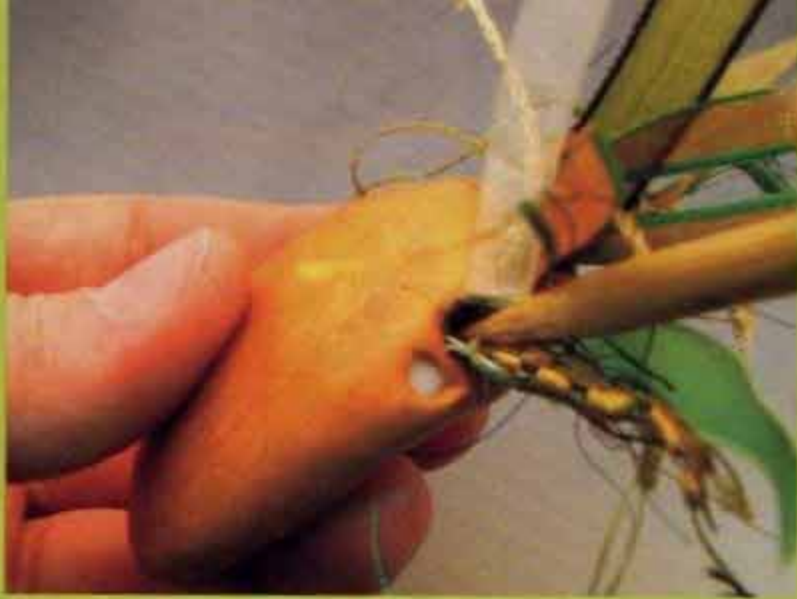
To start with - get a hunk of ribbons - you can use any cotton/polyester/silk ribbons (check the resource section in the back). Different patterns and sizes and shapes will add a lot to the design. With scissors, cut the ribbons into a nice pile of snippets, two to three inches long each - snip, snip, snip!

For the clay, mix your choice of colors for the head - I chose gold clay here - and since this is going to be a larger wall hanging, you can go larger than what we just did for the lion head bead. The head shape is a large oval, flattened on one side.

Let's get all the ribbon fun done first so we won't squash any facial features. Start by using a dowel to poke holes all around the edge of the head shape -- the top half to start with. The holes should be at least half an inch or more deep, and as close together as you can without the holes caving in on each other! Now fill a few of the holes at a time with liquid clay.







two or three at a time works well - and use the point of the dowel tool to stuff one end into a liquid clay-filled hole. Add as many ribbons per hole as you can and add more liquid clay as you go along - we want the ends to be good and gloopy in the hole because that's what going to make them stay put after baking. Keep stuffing until all the holes are filled. Make more holes to continue the ribbons all the way around the

outer edge of the head shape down to the bottom - just leave a little space for the chin later. You can press the clay firmly against the filled ribbons as you go along.

Once the whole outer layer is completed, begin a second layer right above the first - towards the inner face part of the clay - and repeat the steps: poke holes, add liquid clay, stuff in ribbons. This second row only goes from temple to temple. Add any additional ribbons as needed to make the mane thick.



Once you like the ribbon mane, it's time to do a little clay blending so that it looks like the ribbon grew out of the



clay, and not like he just had one of those hair plug transplants - icky. First press all around the ribbons firmly and shape up the oval again if it got misshapen during all that poking. Position the head so that the ribbon faces you, and use the dowel tool, or other wooden sculpting tool, to pull the clay of the face up, over and around all the ribbon holes. Leave the scratchy lines in the clay for a nice furry look (we'll

echo that in the furry lines of the eye and chin). Give the hairline a dusting of mica powder (gold, of course!) to go with the shimmer of the ribbons.



Now, set the lion in front of you, (facing correctly) and make a face in the same way as you did for the small lion focal bead - eye socket indentations, darker color pancakes (I used a pearl green and gold mixture - goes well with the ribbons, doncha' think?) Use the tool to stroke in some of those furry lines to echo the hairline strokes, then finish creating the eyes and eyelids,

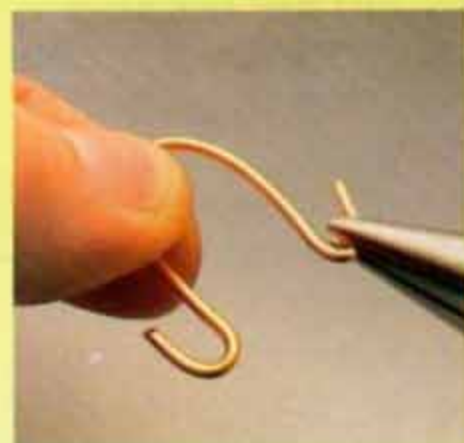
nose, cheeks and chin! Ok, now that we're to the chin, just a little more ribbon-ing to do! Poke holes in the chin like you did for the hairline, fill with liquid clay and stuff in ribbons - but this time use shorter snippets of ribbon, and use ribbons, more like the color of the chin clay. Since this chin is gold and ecru mix, the ribbons are all the creams, ivory and gold colors, and none of the greens and browns. Make several rows along the bottom of the chin, and also poke in individual ribbons as you head up towards the mouth.



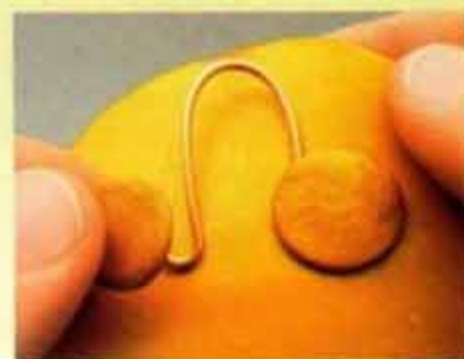
Add any mica powders that you think your lion needs (I dusted a little pearl on the cheeks and chin) and add any ribbons needed to fill in any gaps. Add whiskers of beading cable in the usual way - poke 'em into the cheeks!

He still needs a wire hanger on the back, but let's bake him a bit first (so we don't smoosh any of the details) for about 20 minutes at 260°-275°F. Cool completely, before the next step.

He still needs a wire hanger on the back, but let's bake him a bit first (so we don't smoosh any of the details) for about 20 minutes at 260°-275°F. Cool completely, before the next step.



A 16-18 gauge is a good thickness for the hanging wire. Cut a piece about 3 inches long and use pliers to bend each side back over onto itself like a fish hook (this will make sure the wire stays securely into the clay). Now bend the piece in half. Turn the lion head over and place the wire loop up towards the top - it should not stick out over the edge of the clay. The two fish hooks should be down and the loop up. Try to get it in the center. Blop a drop of liquid clay on top of each fish hook part and then cover the liquid clay and wire end with a ball of clay, pressing it flat into a pancake to attach the wire to the back of the lion. That's it! Now flip him over, and put him back into the oven for the full baking - 275F° for at least an hour. Cool completely. Adding a patina to the face and coating with varnish is optional, of course.



After baking & cooling, use a flat tool, like the blade of a butter knife, to pull the wire loop forward a little for it to hang better. Find an appropriate nook on the wall and wait for all the compliments!



For this luscious lion, I echoed the purples and teals of the ribbons in the choice of nose color and eye beads (a yummy venetian glass bead with a silver foil interior). The details on cheeks, forehead and eyebrows are just for fun!

For this wild lion, I used lots of ribbon, and longer strands of it. The ribbon was poked into a pad of clay and then the head shape added on top, just for a different look (although the ribbons on the forehead did get added directly to the face clay). Lots of chin ribbons, too.

For the eyes, I pressed in a green ball of clay (cooked just a little bit first to firm it up, and liquid clay added underneath to "grab") and then added the eyelids above and below and really smoothed that clay before adding the furry lines. After the lion was baked, I used acrylic paint to add the detailing to the eyeballs - black pupil and a lighter green glow.

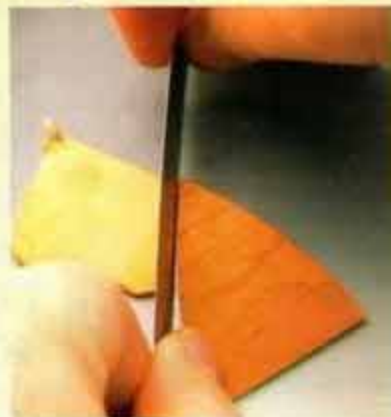


## Fuzzy Pin

This is quick and easy, and fuzzy of course!



Start with clay (this is gold) and roll it through the pasta machine at the widest setting. With a cutting blade, slice out a nice roundish triangle (straight at the top and bowed out on the sides). Cut a second one out that is just a bit larger than the first.



Use a slightly lighter color (I added some ecru to the gold) to add a little triangle cutout at the pointy part - this will be the stylized cheeks and chin.



A nose is just another triangle (this clay color is burnt umber) placed on the top of the lower triangle. Such fun with triangles, huh?! Who knew geometry would be useful!



Add two balls of clay to the area where eyes should go - press them in place and flatten with your finger - a good thumb squash will do it. Wire up some beads for eyes (these are dark brown bicone crystals) and press them into the clay balls.



Now go quick bake these two pieces - the big triangle & the lion face for 10-15 minutes to set everything and let them cool. Since the mane will be fuzzy, let's use some yarn (you can get it at any craft store, or a yarn store of course, or possibly in the back of your closet in the bag with that baby blanket project you never finished because the "baby" is in grad school now). Snip the yarn into little 2-3 inch bits.



Squirt a thick line of liquid clay all around the edge of the larger triangle (the one with no lion face on it!) Now place the pieces of yarn on the liquid clay, sticking out all around, like the rays of the sun.



Now add a line of liquid clay all around the edge on the back of the lion face triangle. Now make a yarn sandwich by adding the top triangle right on top. Into the oven again for another quick bake - another 15 minutes will set the liquid clay. Let it cool.

To add a hinged straight pin on the back, squirt a line of liquid clay on the back of the yarn sandwich lion -- up towards the top, and parallel to the top edge. Open the pin, lay it on top and press down into the liquid clay. Add a bit more liquid clay on the metal of the pin back, and above and below the pin, on the clay.



Roll out a little piece of matching clay - thinner this time (about halfway on the pasta machine dial - or thinner than a dime). Cut a rectangle of clay as wide as the base of the pin and press in right on top of the pin and liquid clay. Another sandwich! (Yuck, I'd rather have peanut butter and jelly).



Now you can bake it all one last time - 275°F for about 25-30 minutes, and he's all done! And all shaggy - which isn't a bad look for a lion. If you want to go fuzzy - give him a bit of a haircut and frizz out the ends of the yarn (which is the technical term for unraveling the strands at the end a bit). Ahhh, much better.



As anyone who grew up with Saturday morning cartoons knows, where there are cats, there are mice to outwit them. So, obviously, this book should end with a little token mouse, doncha' think? Me too.

## Make-A-Mouse



Get a tail ready (leather, ribbon or cord) by trimming to about 2 inches long, and tying a knot on one end.



Make a teardrop shape out of mouse-colored clay, about the size of an almond.



Poke a hole in the rounded end - the tail will go here.



Put some liquid clay in the hole, and poke the knotted end of the tail into the hole. Squeeze the clay around the tail and wipe off any excess liquid clay.



Eyes are round, dark beads, wired in and pressed into either side, closer to the pointy "snout" end.



All that's left are ears! (This is a very simple mouse, obviously.) Start with a small ball of clay and flatten it with your fingers into a small flat ball of clay.



Use the tip of your dowel tool to curl the flattened ball around. Pull that off, set aside, do the other flattened ball. Now poke a hole in each side of the mouse's head, just behind the eyes. Use the dowel tool to press those curled balls into each hole. Ta-daa! Ears!

Dust a little PearlEx powder into the crease of the ears. (This color is Flamingo Pink mixed with Pearl to get a soft pink color.)

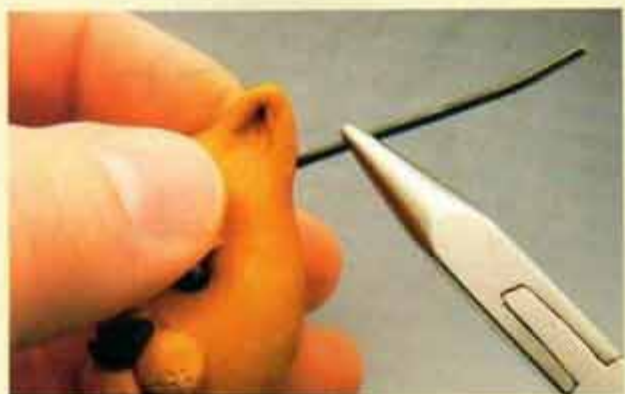
Dust a little of that pink powder on the nose, too - so cute!

All done! Squeek.



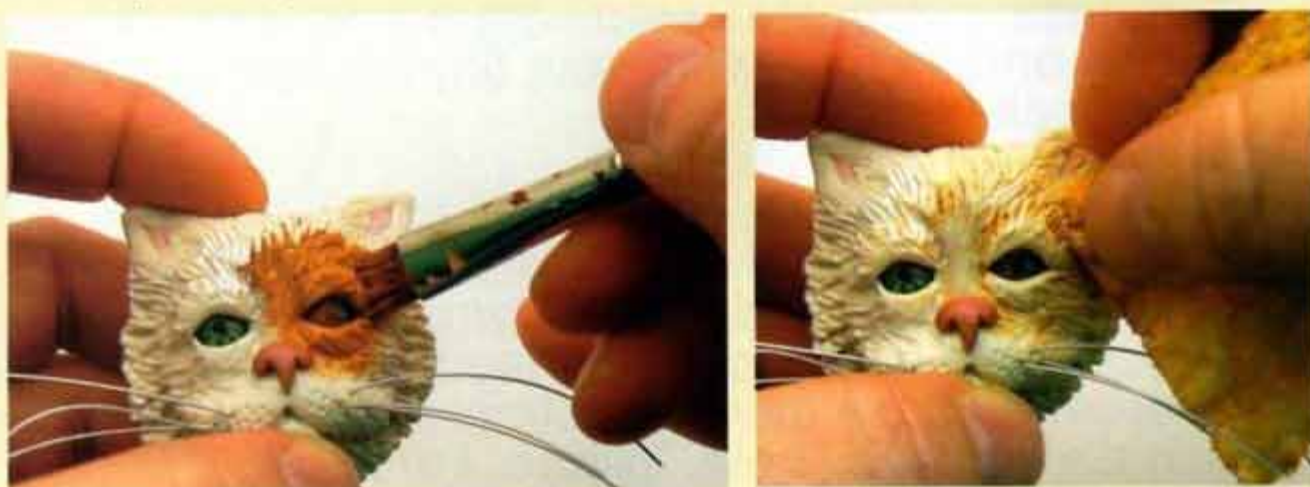
# finishing touches

Once your piece is done and cooled, **remove the wire** that was holding the beading channel open. Grip it with pliers and give it a little twist to break the "grip." Now you can ease it out with the pliers by pulling slowly and firmly.



After the clay has baked and completely cooled, you can **add a patina**. This is an optional step and it's a good idea to practice on a scrap piece to get the hang of it before tackling your masterpiece! This is the same as antiquing -- brushing color onto the piece, then wiping it off the surfaces to leave it only in the cracks and details. It can add richness and depth.

I use acrylic paint and I usually patina in various shades of browns - obviously other colors will work too. The paintbrush should be barely damp and the paint should be the consistency of mayonnaise. Brush it over the surface, really forcing the paint into the cracks and textures. Work only a small amount at a time, an inch or two at the most -- acrylic paint dries quickly. Now, with a well-rung out sponge, wipe the paint off the surface. Use multiple sponges so that the piece stays clean and not "muddy" from paint smeared around.



Let it dry thoroughly. Now it's done - or you can add a **clear coating** to protect the patina, giving it that professional, finished look.



I coat my pieces with Flecto brand Varathane (a water-based outdoor varnish by Rustoleum). I like the low shine and it really seems to work well with polymer. There are other products available too.

Don't varnish over any added beads!

When all is done and dry, pop it back in the oven on a piece of cardstock for a last bake for 15-20 minutes at 200°F.



## ■ Working With Polymer Clay: An Overview

I just love polymer clay! It's colorful, durable, easy to use. And of course, since it's curing temperature is low, so many embellishments can be added to the clay while you're sculpting. I think this opens up worlds of creative possibilities. In case you were wondering - anything that can stand being in an oven with no ill effects for an hour at 275°F will be just dandy to add to your sculptures! If you're not sure, test a little sample piece in the oven first before adding it to your project.

Ok, back to the clay itself. Always begin by conditioning the clay. Warm up a small amount in your hands by kneading, stretching or rolling. A pasta machine is of course the most useful tool ever invented for polymer clay (and you thought it was for making spaghetti) because it does the work of conditioning and blending for you quickly and thoroughly. Conditioning the clay is crucial to the final durability of the piece. As the clay ages, its component ingredients regroup, so to speak, and need to be redistributed to their "original" state. Unconditioned clays are more susceptible to cracking during baking.

Many brands of polymer clay are available, and all are essentially composed of the same basic ingredients. Each brand has its own recommended uses, such as caning, sculpting, doll-making, etc. For most sculpture projects, any brand of polymer clay can be used or mixed with other brands yielding satisfactory results. I use and recommend Premo! brand, made by Sculpey, as a clay especially suited for sculpture.

Many tools can be used when working with polymer clay -- wood, metal and plastic are equally functional. Tools manufactured for traditional clay and ceramic modeling, such as those by Kemper Tools, are an ideal choice. Since polymer clay does not thin down with water, you will rely on your tools and your fingers to manipulate, smooth and texture the clay. All tools used for polymer clay should **not** be used for food afterwards.

You can choose to work on any flat, nonporous work surface, such as glass, or marble. Wood can absorb the plasticizers in the clay, staining the wood and hardening your clay, so I recommend sculpting on a piece of thicker cardstock paper. You should not store your clay on card stock, however, as it will absorb plasticizers from the clay. You can store your clay on wax paper or in plastic sandwich bags or other nonporous containers.

Cleaning your hands when switching colors (so as not to transfer residual color from hands to clay) is important. So is cleanup when you are finished claying. A gritty soap is very helpful in removing the residue. You can also use baby wipes, cold cream, baby oil or rubbing alcohol before soap and water washing.

Baking polymer clay is best accomplished with a home oven or convection oven, although toaster ovens can be adequate when the temperature is supervised, as they have a tendency to overheat (I suspect gremlins). Temperature is critical in the curing of polymer clay. Clay that is cooked at too low a temperature or for too short a time will not adequately cure and can be brittle and easily broken. Always use an oven thermometer and follow the clay manufacturer's instructions. Do **not** cook at too high a temperature, or clay will burn. **Always** use adequate ventilation. Do **not** microwave. Bake in a pan or on a ceramic tile that is designated for clay use only (keep the finished piece on the cardstock before placing it in your cooking pan/tile to prevent the surface touching metal or tile from becoming shiny). If you use a home oven, you should clean the oven before using it for food baking.

On average, baking time for sculpture is a minimum of 20 minutes for every quarter inch of thickness at the thickest part of the clay. For most pieces this means a minimum of 30-45 minutes in the oven. I usually bake my pieces for at least an hour or more.

Cured clay is very durable - so you can pass on your masterpieces as heirlooms to your children and to their children, and their children, and eBay. If you can't finish your project all in one go and want to store it until you can get back to it, take it off the cardstock and place it in a ziploc bag and seal it -- this will keep the dust off until you're ready to play.

# RESOURCES

## supplies and tools

There are so many wonderful places to get the supplies that you need for all the projects in this book. Here are just a few of my favorites to get you started.

**www.ClayFactory.net** will supply you with wire, clays, tools, mica powders and expertise! (Tell 'em Christi sent ya!) phone: 877-728-5739

**www.FireMountainGems.com** is a great place for beads, findings and tools! phone: 800-355-2137

**www.RioGrande.com** has tools, wire, beads and findings (especially a really nice, sturdy hinged straight pin). phone: 800-545-6566

Beadalon **beading wire** can be found at a number of suppliers, or directly from [www.Beadalon.com](http://www.Beadalon.com)

One of the most fun way to buy beads, pearls and art glass is see them, feel them, and justify buying more than you need at a bead show! For starters look into the **To Bead True Blue Show** held yearly at the end of January during the big Tucson, Arizona bead and gem show week ([www.tobeadtrueblue.com](http://www.tobeadtrueblue.com)), and the annual **Bead & Button Show** ([www.BeadandButtonsShow.com](http://www.BeadandButtonsShow.com)) held in Milwaukee, WI in the summer.

## information

[www.NPCG.org](http://www.NPCG.org) is the **National Polymer Clay Guild** website. Check it out for polymer guilds, events and classes! It is a wonderful source for keeping up with what's happening in the polymer community (yup, there's a community).

**www.PolymerClayCentral.com** will connect you to every juicy tidbit of information, opinion, and news in the wide, wide world of polymer clay. If it's happening in polymer clay, it'll wander through here.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cforiginals> is **my chat group** where the nicest group of polymer enthusiasts swap stories, accomplishments and encouragement. Join us!

[www.PolkaDotCreations.com](http://www.PolkaDotCreations.com) is a wonderful **source for books, articles and magazines** that have to do with polymer clay.

**PolymerCafé magazine** is devoted entirely to polymer clay happenings, projects, people. Many other magazines regularly feature polymer articles and projects, too - **Bead & Button, Step By Step Beads, Bead Unique,** and many more.





## special items used in this book

Some special items were used in the projects in this book - here's where to get them.



[www.SpecialtyBeads.com](http://www.SpecialtyBeads.com) carries a delicious assortment of **ribbons** just perfect for lion manes! (as well as some other goodies, like the Venetian glass with foil interior).  
phone: 530-582-4464

For the hand-dyed silk ribbons used in the bows, visit: [www.BatchelderSilk.com](http://www.BatchelderSilk.com)



The wonderful lampwork **glass eyeballs** are a specialty of glassworker Ralph McCaskey. Find them at [www.nightsidestudios.com](http://www.nightsidestudios.com).

Those fun **glass beads that look like balls of yarn** were made by glassworker Cheryl Harris especially for this book. Find her at [chelyha55@yahoo.com](mailto:chelyha55@yahoo.com)



Ask the good folks at [www.BreaBeadWorks.com](http://www.BreaBeadWorks.com) about the **jingle bell beads!** phone: 714-671-9976

Random cat observation: cats were revered in ancient Egypt, but so were dung beetles, so I'm not sure what my point is exactly.



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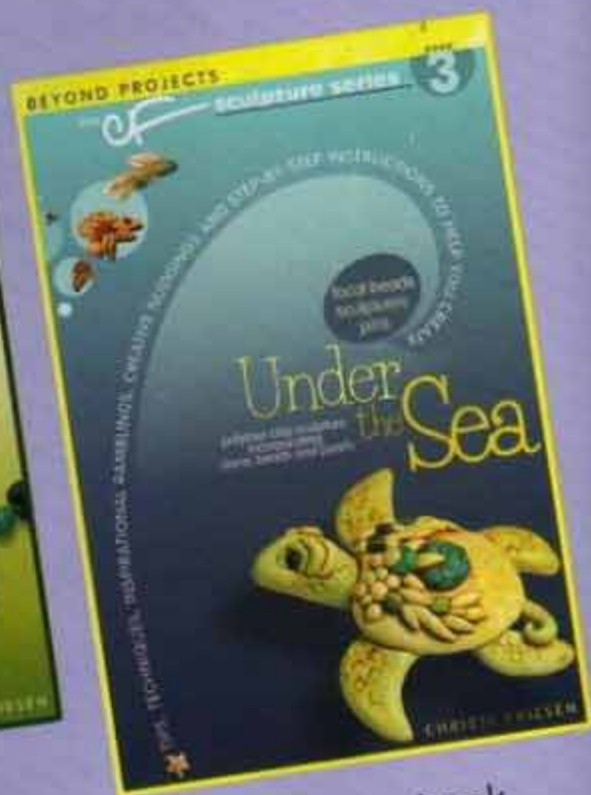
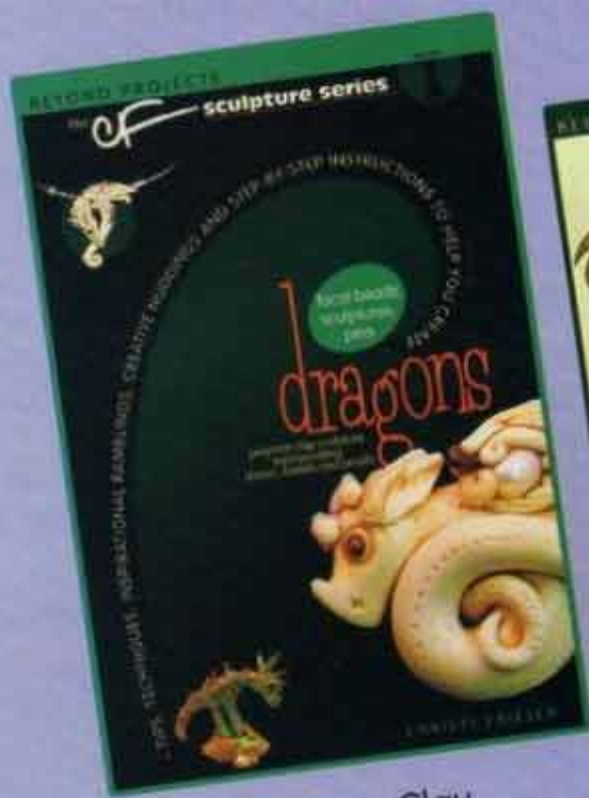
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australian plants, animals, designs and also some other neat stuff

# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

7  
7  
ESP

CAT 

DOG

OCTOPUS

$\pi$  = blueberry

Polymer clay  
x 7 days (week)

= FUN



Christi Friesen was born at a very young age, and has been an artist since that time. She has early memories of being covered in paint, playing with clay, and doodling when she should have been learning her multiplication tables. As a result, her checkbook is a mess, but her studio looks real nice.

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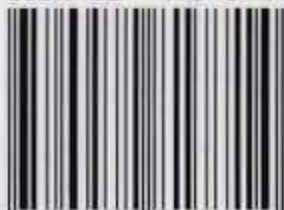


This fourth book in Christi Friesen's "Beyond Projects" series, **CATS Big & Small** is just full of feline fun. The big cats - lions and tigers and pumas, oh my! will roar to life as focal beads, masks and sculptures. But not to be outdone, a parade of kitties will show who really rules. Throughout the book, embellishments of beads, fibers, and surface treatments will make this a book you want to cuddle up with.

# Cats

big & small

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