

There has been a lot of concern about Kato producing hair line cracks once cured. Jana Roberts Benzon suggest that ramping up the heat works. She says that when curing put your Kato into a cold oven at lowest temperature and bake for 20 minutes. Then raise the temperature slightly and increase every 10 minutes till it is up to the recommended temperature, and then bake for the normal time recommended.

In my experience when Donna Kato is curing she puts her work into a bed of powder – both baking powder (baking soda) and cornflower (corn starch) have been recommended although Tony from Van Aken suggests that baking powder is best.

And whilst we are talking about cracking (!) Randee Ketzal has been making Faux ammolite: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/8989180@N02/> so I was reminded of a piece I made in a workshop with Sue Heaser:



This prompted a search for a tutorial and predictably I found one on Polymer clay Central: [http://www.polymerclaycentral.com/faux\\_ammolite1.html](http://www.polymerclaycentral.com/faux_ammolite1.html) One forgets what a fund of tutorials there are on the Polymer clay central site. And another such site is [http://www.everclay.dk/1\\_Tutlinks/tutlinks\\_US.htm](http://www.everclay.dk/1_Tutlinks/tutlinks_US.htm) if you haven't discovered it yet. These two sites will keep you busy for hours.

In my newsletter in December I mentioned a lovely technique by Veronique whereby one can colour an image transfer with pens



Well I have been told of another use for these pens. A friend who personalises the bears she makes for her customers writes the names with these pens. What a good idea. There is no end to the messages one could write – or even use them to write your signature on the pieces you create. [http://www.clayaround.com/product\\_info.php?cPath=24&products\\_id=548](http://www.clayaround.com/product_info.php?cPath=24&products_id=548)

Finally, a reminder that free polymer Claydays are popping up all over the country now and people are travelling miles to get to them. We have an established group in mid Wales. We are having our monthly Clayday on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> March at my home which is half way between Newtown and Welshpool on the A483. If anyone is interested do email for further details and directions (Claydays@clayaround.com).

We start around 10am and finish around 4pm. You are asked to bring your lunch, but I will provide beverages and homemade biscuits. Also bring your pasta machine, your favourite tools and your clay (although, of course, you have the option of buying clay whilst you are here) We have no particular programme – simply a group of incredibly enthusiastic clayers at all levels of expertise who are keen to share their skills and ideas. Do bring with you anything you have created so we can learn from you too. We look forward to meeting you!

The problem is not that there are problems. The problem is expecting otherwise and thinking that having problems is a problem.

Theodore Rubin

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