Opaque Flower Clay

By: Marie Segal of mariesegal.blogspot.com

Follow the detailed step-by-step photos to create these beautiful opaque flower beads in clay. This beautiful clay technique has no painting involved. You can create jewelry and decorative accents with these clay flowers.



Materials:

- 1/2 block of porcelain white or translucent Cernit
- 1 small pea size piece of colored Cernit
- 1 block of opaque white Cernit
- Scrap clay or other colors to make the beads out of
- Clay blade
- Pasta machine

Directions:

1. Condition a half of block of Cernit porcelain white or translucent until soft and pliable.

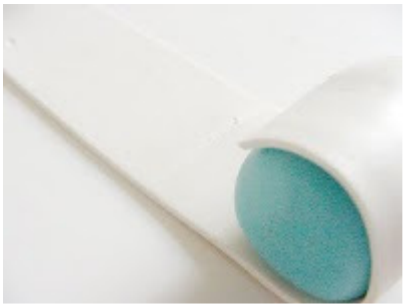
2. Add a small pea size ball of color to the conditioned half block of clay. Mix until it is one color.

3. Roll the colored clay in to a plug that is about 1" in diameter.



4. Condition and roll out the Opaque white clay on the 5th thickest setting in the pasta machine. Trim one edge of this sheet to get a straight edge.

5. Lay the colored clay plug on the straight edge and cut a strip the width of the plug and long enough to wrap around the plug.



6. Roll up the plug in the sheet.

7. Roll the plug over the sheet in front of the plug gently and roll the plug back. Cut inside the line you will see on the sheet with the blade.

8. Remove the excess sheet, set aside, and then roll the plug and sheet up. The ends will match or very close. Press the edges together and smooth the seam away.

9. Cut the plug on the side with your clay blade about half way through the plug. Do not cut where the seam was.



10. Gently move the cut open and take the excess sheet and place in to the opened cut. Close up the cut in the clay with the excess piece inside the plug.

11. Trim the excess sheet off at the edge of the opening on the plug.

12. Make another cut in to the plug on one side of the center cut and place the excess sheet piece in to this cut and trim away the excess level with the plug side.



13. Do this again on the other side of the center cut.

14. Close all the cuts with sheets and gently press everything together.

15. Compact the whole plug together.Squeeze it in the center from all sides to form a little waist. As you rotate and press the cane move up to one end of the cane. Then turn the cane over and start at the center waist and rotate and press and you move up to the other end. I keep doing this until the cane or plug is longer and half of the size around that it was. Do not worry about lumps and bumps. The rolling will take the lumps out. By compacting the plug this way, it will keep the cane from shifting as much inside. Then place on your work surface and roll the whole log down to about 3/8" in diameter. You will need 5 pieces about the same length for the petals.



16. Make a little pinch on one side of each of the petal logs where lines come to the outside of the log. Turn over the logs to the other end and pinch each one of those ends.

17. Line up the pinches on a log by holding the pinches and rocking them in to alignment. Then pinch down the length of the cane from pinch to pinch. Do this to all 5 pieces. Make the point on the log down the side pretty sharp.

18. Place three of the logs together with the points in the middle. There will be a little canal or channel down the center of the three logs.



19. Roll a small coil 1/8" or a little larger depending on the size of the channel to go in the center.

20. Now place in the other two petals lining them up from one end to the other. Gently press from one end to the other on each petal to press it together.



21. You can pack the outside with color or you can coax the cane down by gently sliding your finger and your thumb down the dips on opposite sides. Then turning the cane around and sliding down the length of the cane again. You keep turning and sliding and the cane will lengthen. Then I turn the cane over from end to end and do it the same process again. It will not be all perfect and you will have a knobby end, I take advantage of the smaller and larger flowers when I use them. This is a very gentle process. If the dips fill in you can run a tool down the length of the cane.

22. This is the cane pulled out. You slice these off as thin as possible and place on to a core of clay in the color of your choice. It is not imperative for the beads I do to have the complete cane slice and when I roll these in to the core it will give the illusion of many layers. It is important to watch color that you apply the slices to, it will change the color of the petals.



