

# Coloring Stamped or Hand Drawn Images on Baked Polymer Clay

by Penni Jo Couch



Above: Pendant using Thoughtful Stamp, colored and set into a Fire Mountain setting.

Stamping, drawing and coloring on polymer clay is a project inspired by a "That's Clever" TV show featuring artist Karen Lorraine. She showed how to make a pendant with Mokume Gane on one side and she drew a face on the other side that was smooth baked clay. Fascinated with the ability to draw on baked clay, I began to try to create fine art and portraits using oil pencils on a baked polymer clay cabochon.

To make the project a bit easier, I created a cabochon mold in the standard 40mm by 30mm size.

Shown below left.

**Create a baked polymer clay shape on which to color.**

## Materials for Cabochon:

- Polymer clay white cabochon made using this mix: (any shape is fine as long as it is flat or slightly rounded.)
  - Two parts of any brand of translucent. (Kato and Sculpey III translucent clays seem to be the whitest.)
  - Two parts of any brand of Pearl clay.
  - One eighth part any brand of white clay
- Dominos and More Mold or flat clay - any shape.
- Sweet Spirit Medium rubber stamp or your own drawing.
- Stamp ink that is friendly with clear stamps. **I use Palette Hybrid Ink available at: <http://www.stewartsuperior.com>**
- 220 or 320 grit wet / dry sand paper.



Above: Cabochon stamped with Sweet Spirit image.  
Above Center: Finished Sweet Spirit Pendant.



Below:

- Dish detergent & water
- Pitt super fine India ink permanent marker. Available at Hobby Lobby.
- Kato Liquid Medium.
- Polymer clay light colored cabochon baked and sanded as above.

Source for cabochon molds & Rubber Stamps  
~ Artist Penni Jo Couch.  
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### Mixing and baking the clay cabochon

1. Mix clay thoroughly. Mold or shape the pearl/translucent clay using a mold, cutter or by hand. The top should be flat or just slightly rounded.
2. Bake following manufacturer's instructions. Allow to cool.
3. Mix a drop or two of dish detergent into a small container of water. Lightly sand in all directions using the 400 grit wet/dry sandpaper. This light sanding will give 'tooth' to the clay so that you can draw on it.
  - a. Go back and forth first.
  - b. Wipe, go top to bottom.
  - c. Wipe, go at an angle one way.
  - d. Wipe, then go at an angle the other way.
  - e. Rinse and wipe dry.

### Hand Drawn Artwork

Here is how to trace the artwork onto your baked pendant or cabochon:

1. Size the artwork to fit your clay using your computer with printer or by drawing the artwork to size. Cut the artwork to the same size as your baked clay disk or cabochon.
2. Trial fit the artwork to the cabochon, or pendant, noting the placement of the artwork.
3. Turn the cut out artwork over and place it on a white sheet of paper or a light table so that you can see the line art through the paper.
4. Using a soft pencil, draw over the artwork.
5. Turn the face back over and place it on the cabochon.  
NOTE: Try not to slide the drawing around as the pencil will come off on the baked disk as the carbon will smear.
6. Remove the paper and go over any of the lines that need to be restored.
7. Color the artwork using oil pencils.

### Stamping artwork onto your baked cabochon:

1. Select desired face or other artwork.
2. Trial fit the face to the cabochon, or pendant, noting placement.
3. Turn the stamp face up and pat it with the ink pad, applying the ink evenly.
4. Eyeball the placement of the stamp and press it into place. TAKE YOUR TIME. Hybrid ink does not dry quickly so you have plenty of time to stamp the image.
5. While holding the stamp in the middle, go around the other parts, eyes, hair line, chin etc, gently pressing them in place. Lift straight up.  
NOTE: Try not to slide the stamp around, it will smear.

### What, NO HAIR?

Since the faces are 'close up' on the cabs, I have only made lines to denote hair placement and or hairlines. To make hair, follow the lines of movement using colored pencils, from light to dark. You may add hats, clothing

parts, etc if desired.

### Materials for Coloring the Cabochon:

•**Walnut Hollow Oil pencils** ~ These have been the best set for coloring on polymer clay as the colors will not run when the coating of Kato Liquid Medium is applied over the drawing. They come in 36 colors including metallics and can be ordered from the web.

If using another brand of pencils, whether or not they are oil based, we have found that the liquid clay often dissolves the colors of other brands of pencils when brushed over the artwork.

•Polymer clay white cabochon baked and sanded as above.



### Instructions:

1. When the ink is dry, plan your drawing from dark to light. Using a dark brown or Venetian Red pencil begin by drawing the nostrils and the side of the nose where it will be shaded. Add any other detail lines at this point.
2. Color the eyes and lightly draw in shadows.
  - a. Use a black pencil to place the pupils.
  - b. Then add the iris color, blue, gray, brown, or dark brown.
  - c. Next go over the eye lines and upper lids with dark brown or lightly with black. The dark line on the upper lid 'casts' a shadow on the eye.
  - d. Using black or dark brown, color the dots for the nostrils and the corners of the mouth.
3. Skin tones: Begin with the darkest colors first, coloring very lightly. If the area is rounded, like a cheek or chin, follow the contours, and keep the lines rounded and soft.
4. Continue adding colors from dark to light in layers over the total skin area, face, ears, neck etc. As you build the colors, the shapes will become more three dimensional.
5. Color the lips.
  - Using a red color of choice, color the upper lip fully. (I used Walnut hollow red pencil.)
  - Outline the bottom lip, staying inside the lines.
  - Color the corners of the lower lip.
  - Use the skin tone pencil and color the lower lip, coloring over the red and dark color in the corners.
  - These steps give the lower lip a rounded, pouty shine.
6. Using a sharp olive green or blue green pencil, lightly draw the line between the upper and lower lip to sepa-



rate the two and cast a slight shadow on the lower lip.

7. Complimentary colors like olive green or blue green can be used in the artwork if desired. For example, there is always a slight greenish or bluish color in flesh tones. You can VERY LIGHTLY use a tiny bit of a complimentary color in the face for modeling, or rounding the face. The greenish or blueish colors are very effective for shading over the eyes. It can also make the darks appear more lifelike.

8. Color in the skin tones using the light flesh Walnut Hollow pencil going over all of the darks except for the eyes. As you color over the dark colors the layers will blend. Color all of the skin tone at this time including the neck.

9. To bring out highlights, use the white pencil to lighten the tip of the nose, forehead and chin.

10. Hair: Begin drawing lines in the direction that hair grows from dark to light. When the lines, shadows and direction are complete, then cover the hair completely with the lightest, base hair color. You may choose to use an appropriate complementary color in the hair for realism.

a. Black Hair: Begin with black lines followed by dark brown, light brown blue and, for a complimentary color, use a tiny bit of red brown. A good highlight color is pale gray, white or very light blue.

b. Brown Hair: Start with dark brown lines, to light brown, then red brown. Yellow ochre is a good highlight color for brown hair. A complimentary color would be a muted blue.

c. Blonde Hair: Start with direction lines of dark or medium brown. Lightly draw the hair direction using the medium or red brown pencil. Put the shadows of waves in if needed then color the hair, including the line work with either yellow or yellow ochre. A complimentary color would be lavender.

11. If desired, tiny highlights can be added by holding a craft knife at a low angle and gently scraping color away to reveal the lighter clay. Optional: Very tiny acrylic paint dots can be added to make the 'shine' in eyes or to add highlights to areas.

12. When you are finished with the coloring, it's time for the final line art. Using the PITT artist pen go over appropriate parts of the colored pencil drawing, picking up details and accenting areas like the pupil of an eye, movement of the



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hair, curls, etc. Let the ink dry.

13. Note: If you go back over the dry Pitt marker lines with colored pencil, the pencil sort of 'chips' the ink off. If this happens the Pitt marker lines can be reapplied if needed. Allow the ink to dry again.

14. To be sure the ink is dry, blot gently with a paper towel.

15. When the ink is dry, use your finger to spread Kato liquid medium over the artwork. Work quickly, do not rub or go over the artwork after applying the liquid medium. Let the artwork sit for a while before baking to allow any bubbles to slide to the sides and for the liquid medium to level.

16. Bake the disk for 10 minutes. Read the package of clay for baking temp. Use an oven thermometer for accuracy.

17. To create bright 'gold' jewelry, make a very tiny puddle of paint from and 18D Gold Pen by Krylon. Use a tiny stylus or pin to pick up the paint and dot the 'gold' jewelry onto the cab. Allow to dry. Varnish to prevent chipping.

18. If there is no back to the artwork, the decorative edges and back can be added along with some through the center designs and appropriate embellishments.



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The cab in the video is the oval shape in the mold PJ004 "Dominoes and More" Flexible Urethane Rubber Mold.

The rubber stamp shown is "Sweet Spirit" size: Medium.

Both available at <http://www.pennibears.com>

Original illustrations for stamps, photography and tutorial by Penni Jo Couch

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NOTE: Even though all the cabochons started with the

Pitt pen.



same stamp, slight differences in coloring make each one to have a slightly difference look and feeling.

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