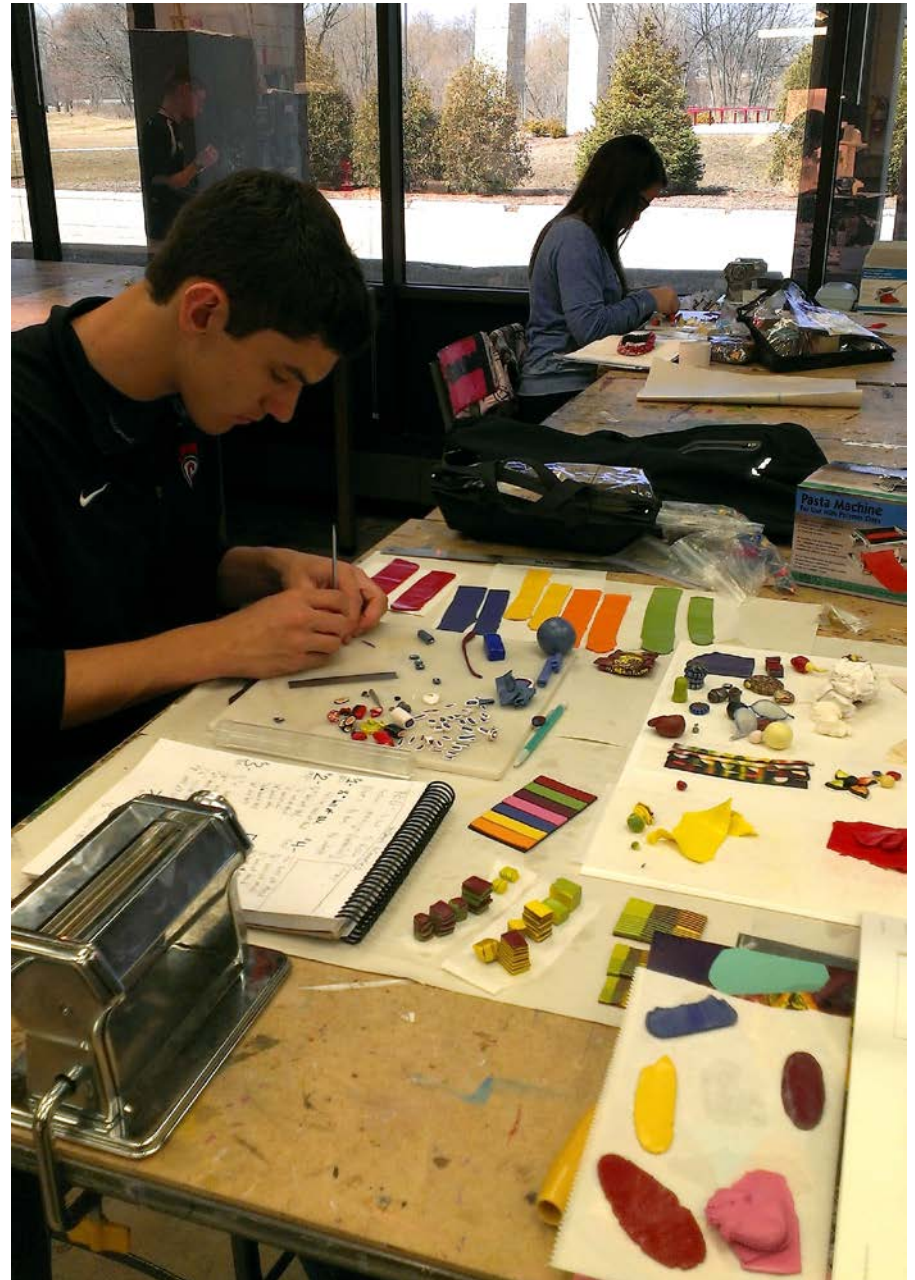


POLYMER GOES TO COLLEGE

Presented by Diane Levesque
October 18, 2014

Art 200: Polymer Clay

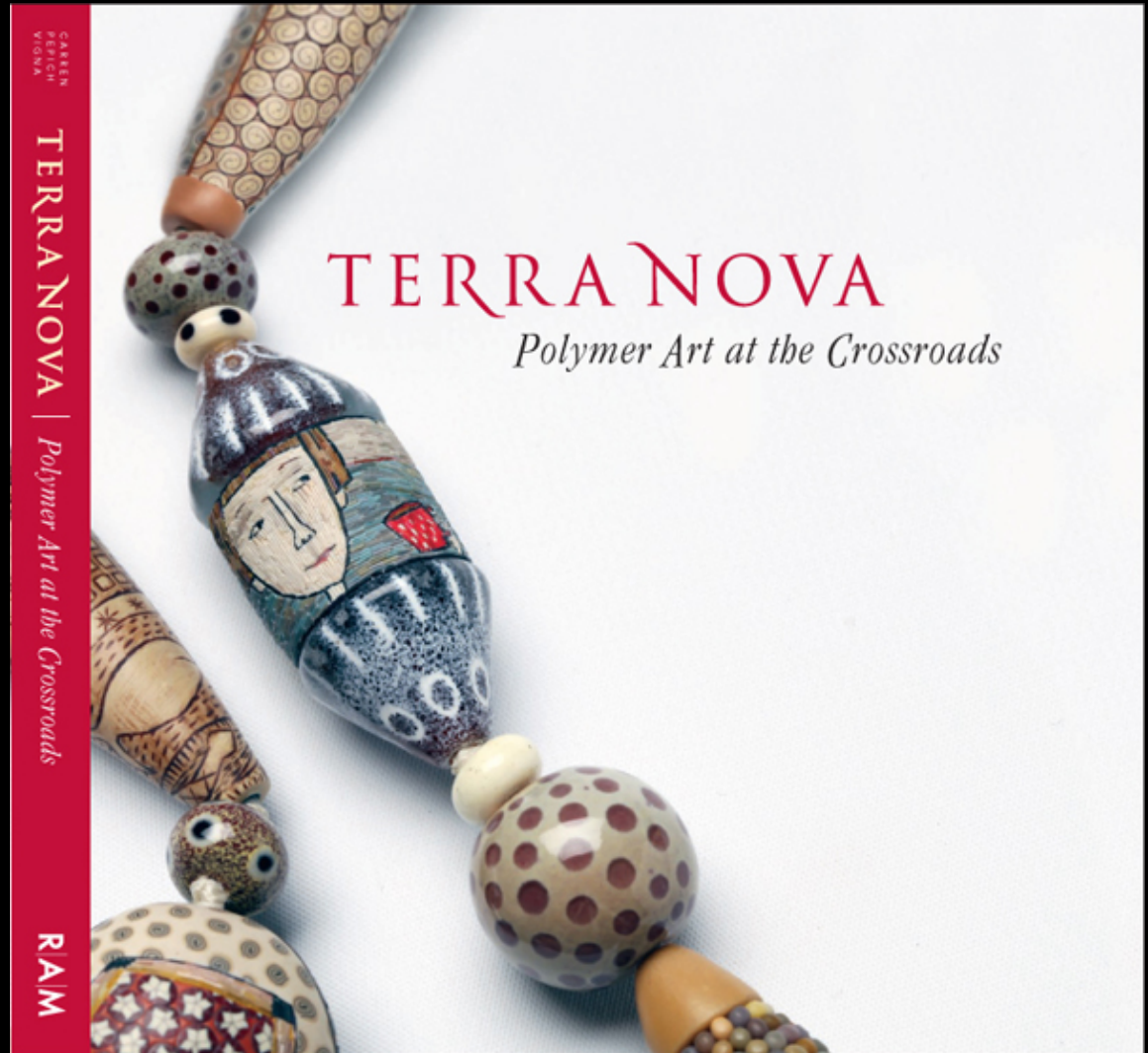
A College Level
Full- Credit
14 week
Semester
Studio Arts Course



Terra Nova: Polymer at the Crossroads

2011- 2012

Racine
Art
Museum



Lindly Haunani

Summer 2012

Arrowmont School of Arts & Crafts

Polymer Workshop

*Polymer Clay Color Inspirations
Techniques and Jewelry Projects
For Creating Successful Palettes*

by Lindly Haunani and Maggie Maggio
would become the textbook for the
course. *



Lindly Haunani and Maggie Maggio

POLYMER CLAY COLOR INSPIRATIONS

TECHNIQUES AND JEWELRY PROJECTS FOR CREATING SUCCESSFUL PALETTES



The Carthage Art Department offers students the chance to create art in a breathtaking setting, master traditional media even as they push the boundaries of their personal vision, and learn from the great works hanging in the internationally recognized galleries of nearby Chicago and Milwaukee.

Carthage's studio art courses provide a foundation in traditional media while preparing students to explore new media... Students master fundamental concepts of design, materials, and tools of the fine arts, and acquire languages of visual communication as they work in two and three dimensions.

Creating the course:

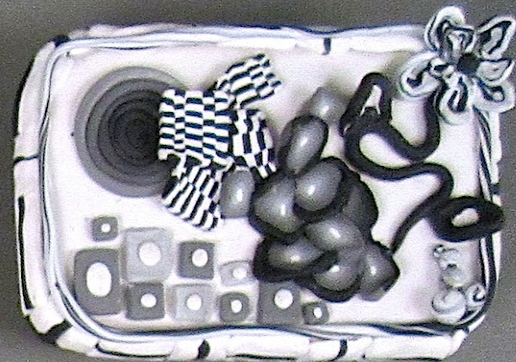
- Course proposal
- Curriculum
- Class schedule

Teaching the Course:

- Fine Arts Requirement at a Liberal Arts College (FAR)
- Adjusting for limited and varied skill sets
- Quality vs. quantity of experiences
- A surprising challenge
- Adapting to contingencies



Winter Semester of 2014- Starting the class without student art supplies. Improvising included working with just black and white clay and Altoid tin boxes.



1st class project
Inspired by Laura Schiller's
Black & White Tangle series



John Warnock *Black to White Covered Tin Box*



**Maggie Maggio
sends scrap clay**

The significance of color theory in teaching polymer at the college level:

- Studio art curriculum and course goals were required to comply with goals and objectives of a studio art course
- Color theory approach can be applied to courses in other media
- Immediacy of polymer in synthesizing color theory through multiple intelligences:

Visual - Spatial
Bodily- Kinesthetic
Tactile
Right Brain

Math skills
Thinking Conceptually
Problem solving
Left Brain



Stefanie Huttelmaier mixes six colors to match her collage *.

Color Tiles and Rainbow Pinch Petal Necklace *

Heidi Hollman



Vicki Lumbert



Class work : Color Tiles and the Rainbow Pinch Petal Necklace *

Color theory in practice:

Color sample tiles = Color Chart in painting/ Test tiles in ceramics

Rainbow necklace = Hue, Saturation & Value in painting

Class Projects

Students had three format options for creating class projects :

1. Jewelry
2. Vessels
3. Sculpture

Most demonstrations on techniques were shown in variations of the three formats.

Professor Diane Levesque demonstrates Pivot Bead Technique*





Students work on Leaves and Berries* Project.
Techniques: bulls-eye cane and stacked canes.

Whitney Zenk

Clayton Irwin



Clayton Irwin: Working on Leaves & Berries *project components.

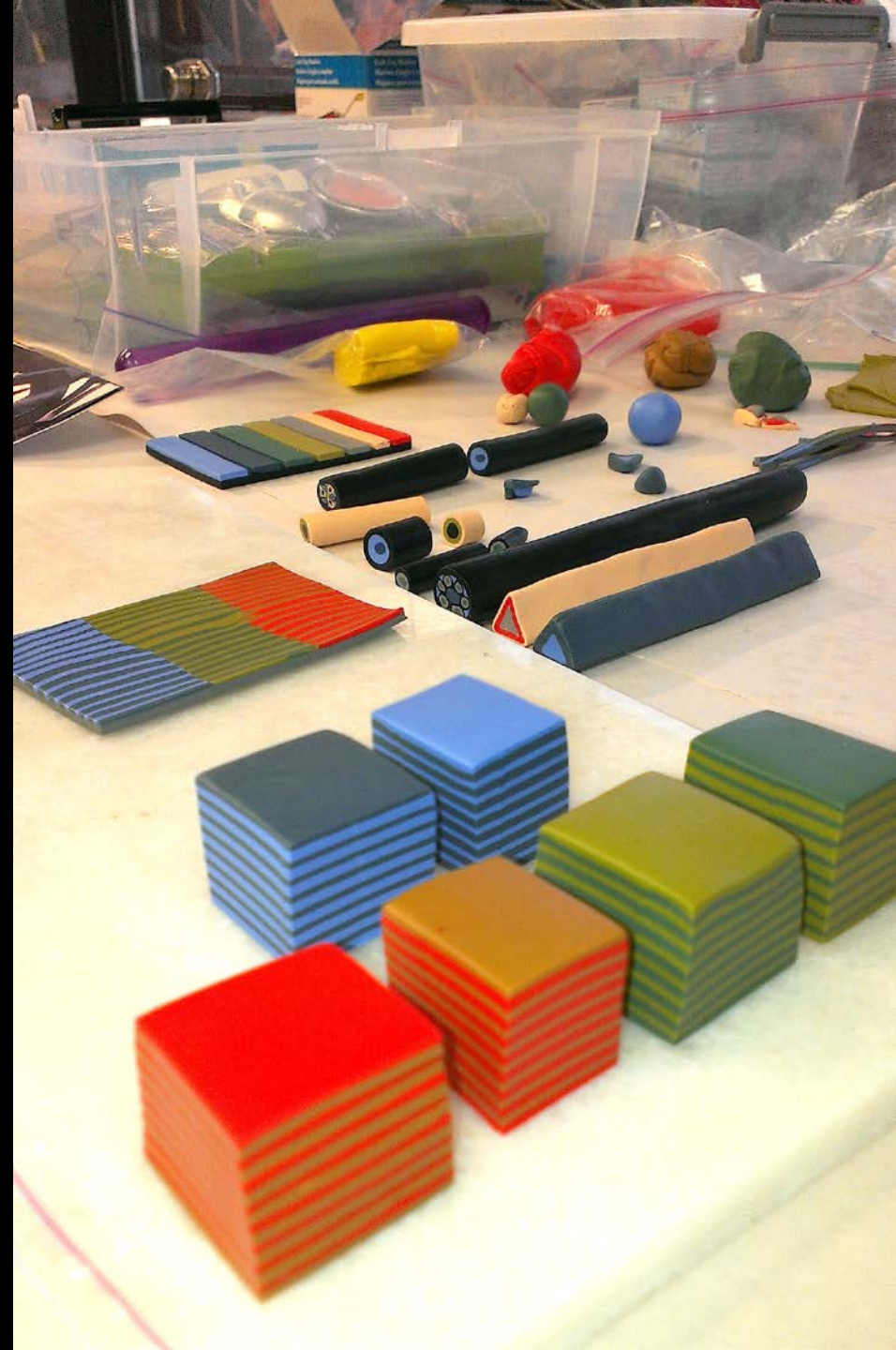
Vicky Lumbert

Carefully arranged components
for Leaves & Berries* Project



Finished work

Necklace
& bracelet



Student examples of format variations for class projects

Stefanie Huttelmaier

Leaves and Berries Bracelet*



Heidi Hollman

Leaves and Berries Bowl*

John Warnock

Leaves and Berries Vase*

Leaves & Berries
Abstract Sculpture*

Leaves & Berries
Sample tiles*





Sean Mitchell

*Woodland
Fantasy
Project*

**Multiple
Techniques:**
Including Pinch –petal
“leaves”, Bulls-eye
Cane, Stacked cane
and Mokume Gane

Sculpture scene

Variations on format of projects enabled exploration in creative solutions:

- Students could chose the format best suited to their expectations and skills
- As the course progressed, students could try different formats or remain in one area to develop various techniques
- Students were often inspired by their classmates application of a technique and more likely to explore in the next project



Regular class critiques of projects are required of all fine art courses.

John	Whitney	Clayton	Sean	Nuo	Heidi	Vicki	Stefanie	Melanie
Warnock	Zenk	Irwin	Mitchell	Xu	Hollman	Lumbert	Huttelmaier	Grady

John Warnock

Works in Progress

Creating components
for three bead variations
project





Stefanie Huttelmaier

Discovering the tantalizing possibilities of the Mokume Gane technique.



John Warnock's workspace with multiple projects in-progress: including mokume gane beads for a bracelet.

Heidi Hollmann

Mokume Gane
Necklace



Clayton Irwin

Mokume Gane Necklace
with brass chain.





Faux Work Samples

Heidi
Hollman

Lama Jar

Melanie
Grady

*Faux Mayan
Jar*



Clayton Irwin

*Faux Ivory Necklace
with Elephant Pendant*



Studying the Masters: Polymer in Context

- Direct access to the *Racine Art Museum* polymer collection allowed students to see the master artists' works that they had studied and researched in class.
- Online sources provide awareness of the newest innovations:
 - Polymer Art Archive
 - Polymer Clay Daily
 - The Daily Polymer Arts Blog
 - Individual artists websites and blogs



A Field Trip to the **Racine Art Museum** where curator Lena Vigna explains the history of the RAM Polymer Collection. Students were very impressed to see the work of Pier Voulkos, Kathleen Dustin, Tory Hughes, Cynthia Toops, Jeffrey Lloyd Dever, Lindly Haunani, Maggie Maggio, Dan Cormier and so many others.

The course blog, “ A Polymer Clay Course”, encourages research on individual polymer artists and compares their work to fine art works in painting, sculpture, printmaking, sculpture and installation art .

Ernst Haeckel



Melanie West

Inner Wave BioBangle in Orange and Blue





Melanie Grady works on her *Leaves & Berries* Bracelet* inspired by Melanie West's work.

Sarah Shriver

By Melanie Grady



All students were required to create and present a 15-minute talk about their favorite polymer artist. Melanie Grady selected Sarah Shriver.

Art Background

- Employed at a fabric and art store
 - San Francisco
 - Rugs and fabrics
 - 1987 started looking into polymer clay



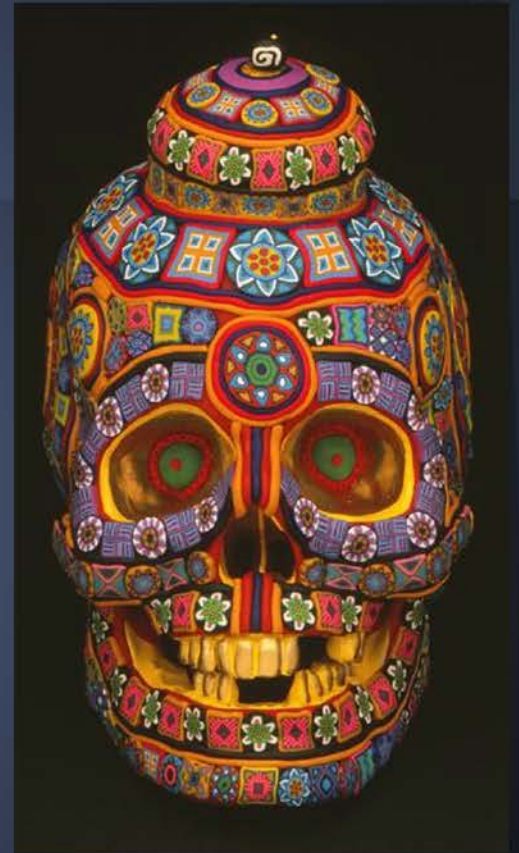
Sarah Shriver, Rust String Necklace, 1990

Inspiration

- Martha Breen
 - Urban Tribe
 - Candy-like canes



Martha Breen, Platform Mules, size 5, 1995



Martha Breen, Alice, 1995

Technique

- Caning
- Colors inspired by nature
- Loves color blending
- Looks at paintings for ideas



Sarah Shriver's demos

Canes

- Average is 8 lbs
- Cut huge cane apart
 - Into several small canes
 - Resulting in a Kaleidoscope



Sarah Shriver, Black and Ivory Collar
Necklace, circa 1990



Detail from above

Jewelry

- Makes Kaleidoscopes into jewelry



Sarah Shriver, Black and Ivory Collar
Necklace, circa 1991



Sarah Shriver, Fish Bone Necklace, 1987



Sarah Shriver, Aqua, Gold and Purple Bracelet,
2009

Final Projects had a greater range of formats tailored to the interests and major of the students.

Example:

A Geography major created a map of the U.S.A. using various raised heights of bulls-eye canes for a topographical effect.



John Warnock - Final Project

Stefanie Huttelmaier

Striped Contrast Die-Cut Necklace

Stefanie studied Dan Cormier's book "Relief Beyond Belief" and tried out his oval templates to make her necklace.

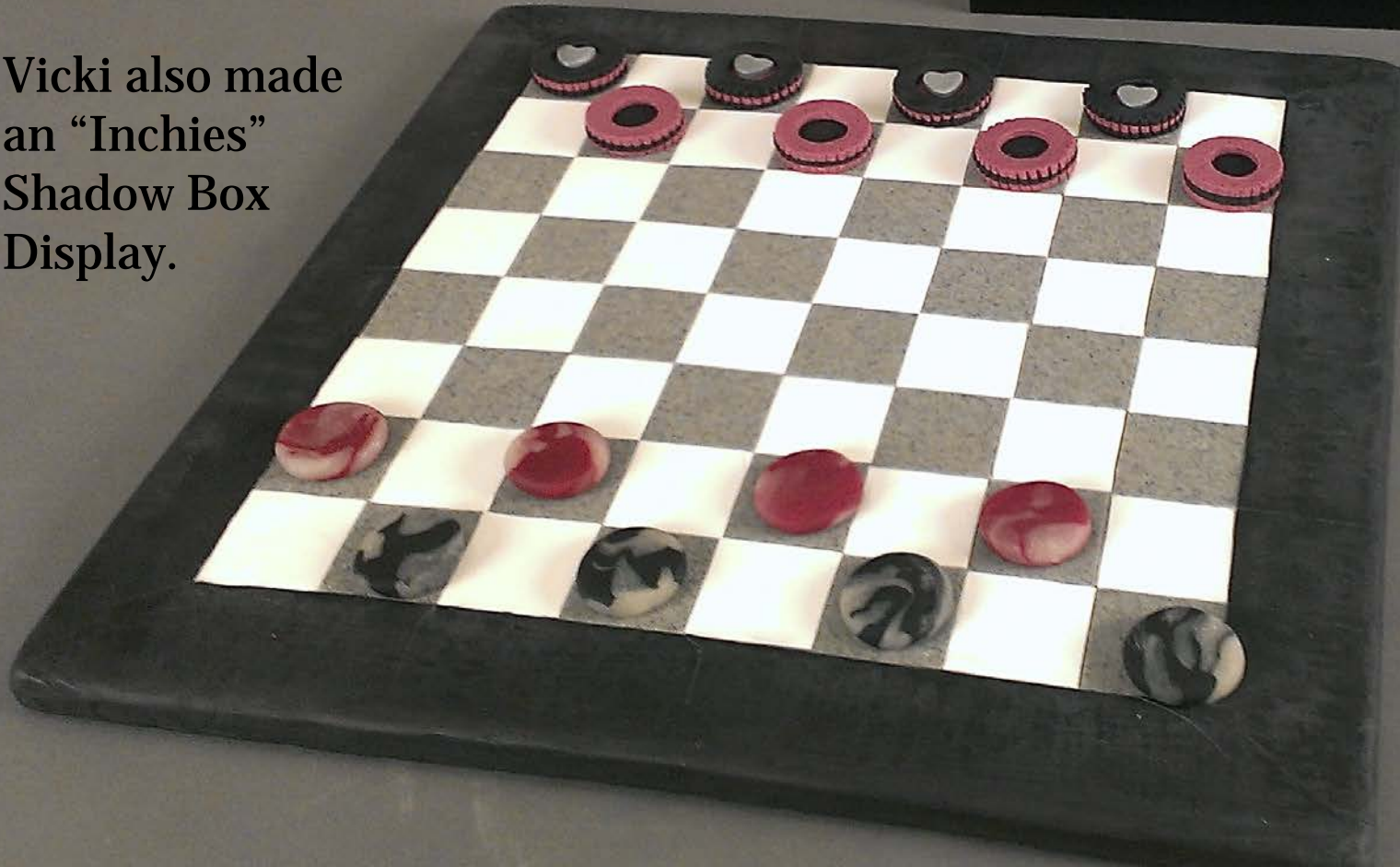
Special thanks to Dan Cormier & Tracy Holmes for providing materials from *The Cutting Edge*



Vicki Lumbert

Checkerboard with
faux marble playing
pieces.

Vicki also made
an “Inchies”
Shadow Box
Display.





Melanie Grady

*Peacock Sculpture
on glass vase*

15" x 6" diameter

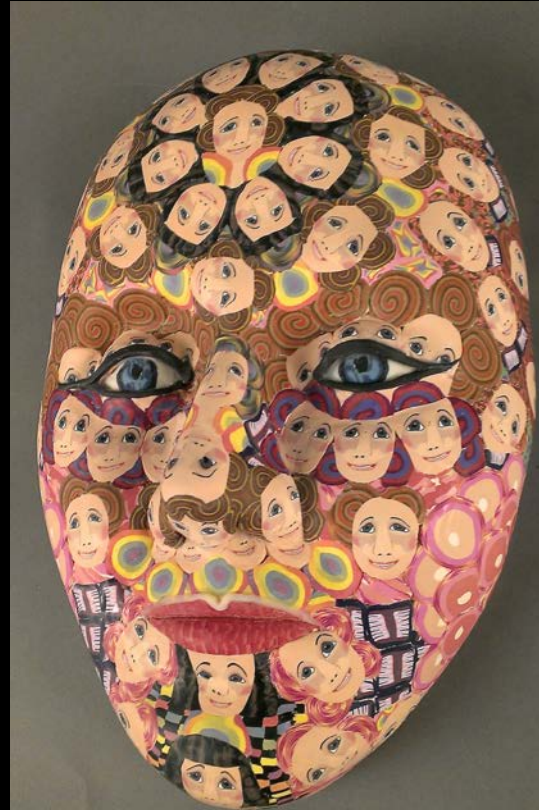
Melanie created her
own peacock feather cane
for this project

Heidi Hollman

Doll Face Mask

10" x 6" x 4"

Heidi designed and created a face cane along with multiple canes for hair and decorative details.





Thanks to Iris Weiss, Education Manager of Polyform Products, students received a very generous gift of *Premo* sampler sets and one pound packages of white, black and translucent polymer.

WHEW ! The gift arrived just as the students were getting low on clay.

Conclusion: Teaching polymer in a college level studio art program allows students to explore the medium within the larger visual arts dialogue.

Polymer is blended within a selection of studio art media along with traditional painting, printmaking, sculpture, and ceramics courses.

Discussion & Questions

Special Thanks and Acknowledgements:

This course could not have evolved without the help of Lindly Haunani ,Maggie Maggio, Rachel Carren and Elise Winters for their feedback and comments on the syllabus and class schedule.

Special thanks to the Lena Vigna and Bruce Pepich for their dedication to the education and promotion of the Polymer Collection at the Racine Art Museum.



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