

Dez Gerard



Having participated in creative activity from early childhood it seemed only natural that I would continue in the arts as I grew older. After completing my undergraduate degree in Iowa I went on to receive a master's degree in Applied Arts with a specialty in textile design. After graduation I taught textile design at Iowa State University.

As a stay-at-home mom with two children I continued my art work when time allowed, making silk screened cards, placemats, etc. and selling them at local shops and galleries.

I went on to teach art in the public schools, but continued to display my work in local shows and fairs in the summer. When my children left the nest, I opened my own studio and worked in pottery, weaving and macrame. I taught classes in all of these as well. Later I designed crocheted hats and sweaters and sold them at many craft shows throughout the Northeast. In order to make my sweaters more interesting I began to make buttons from polymer clay.



When I moved to New Mexico in 1991 I thought about how I could focus my creativity bringing together all the skills I had developed during my long life. While I was thinking on this I rediscovered polymer clay-the one medium where I could use all the things I had learned. From this I soon began to make jewelry using techniques I had learned long before.

Polymer clay is an incredible medium. It can be easily molded, formed into "canes" similar to millefiori work in colored glass, woven, crocheted



and made to resemble precious stones. It does not change color or shrink during the curing process. Since it is a fairly new medium we are just beginning to explore the possibilities.

While in New Mexico my jewelry was inspired by the petroglyphs and the black and white pottery of the ancient Mimbres people. In 2006 I was honored to have three pictures of my work selected for the book 400 Polymer Clay Designs published by Lark Publications. When I returned to Massachusetts in 2007, in addition to the Southwest designs, I have let my imagination run with lots of color and intricate designs.



After 16 years of working with this clay I am still discovering new and exciting things that I can do with it.