

Koi Ripples

This project by Ellen Kharade shows how to combine PMC silver clay with cold cure epoxy enamel to create an unusual necklace with a taste of the orient.



Ellen says: "Cold cure enamels are intense pigments suspended in a resin. Mixed with a hardener they create permanent colour effects with a hard, glassy finish. They can also be used on other metals such as copper, palladium and gold. The advantage of using cold cure enamels is that they are quick to use with predictable results and don't require a specialist kiln to fire them. They work particularly well with PMC silver clay and decorative rubber mats to create highly ornate pieces. Here the design from the rubber mat has been filled with resin to emulate water and create a contrast with the polished fish motif."

MATERIALS AND TOOLS

- ✓ 16g of PMC3 precious metal silver clay
- ✓ Two 5mm sterling silver round jump rings
- ✓ One 6mm sterling silver jump ring
- ✓ One sterling silver chain
- ✓ Two headpins
- ✓ Four 4mm Swarovski Jet AB 2X crystals
- ✓ Two blue pearls or blue glass beads
- ✓ CHEMSET® ES 8557 Transparent Green resin
- ✓ CHEMSET® ES 8558 Transparent Blue resin
- ✓ CHEMSET® ES 8204 Hardener
- ✓ Basic tool kit for preparing PMC
- ✓ Small koi rubber stamp
- ✓ Textured swirl mat
- ✓ Plastic rolling pin
- ✓ Cocktail stick
- ✓ Jewellery file
- ✓ Emery board
- ✓ Badger balm
- ✓ Hand held butane torch and lighter fuel
- ✓ Firebrick
- ✓ Stainless steel brush
- ✓ Washing up liquid
- ✓ Buffer tool
- ✓ Burnishing pad
- ✓ Round nose pliers

STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS



STEP 1

Rub a little badger balm onto your hands, rolling pin and swirls mat. Roll a piece of clay into a flat sheet of about 2mm thick. Place the mat over the clay and gently press until you get a print with a good impression then carefully peel the mat away. Using a straight edged blade trim the clay to a rectangle 2cm x 4cm.



STEP 2

Roll out a piece of clay to the same thickness as before and cover the stamp with a little badger balm. Gently press the stamp into the clay, practice on a scrap piece of polymer clay until you are happy with the pressure required to achieve a good impression.



STEP 3

Using a scalpel carefully cut around the shape of the fish whilst it is still in the soft stage but not really wet. Take care whilst doing this to maintain the overall form of the fish.



STEP 4

Using a cocktail stick make a hole near the end of the fish's tail and a hole at either end of the swirl piece. Take into consideration that the holes will shrink when fired so make them plenty large enough to take the jump rings.



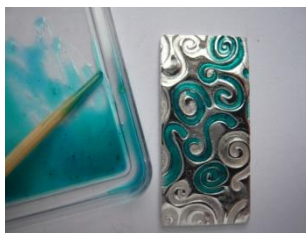
STEP 5

When dry, use a fine emery paper to gently remove any rough edges. Place the pieces onto the firebrick and slowly move the torch over the surfaces, they will smoke at first, this is just the organic binder burning off. The pieces will glow orange and this indicates that the silver is being fired. Keep the heat moving over the pieces for about two minutes and then leave to cool down.



STEP 6

Dip the wire brush into a little washing up liquid and brush over the pieces until the white coating is removed and the silver beneath is revealed. Use emery papers and a buffing pad to polish the pieces to a high mirror finish.



STEP 7

Mix the blue and green enamels with the hardener to the manufacturer's instructions. Using a cocktail stick pick up a little of the enamel and drop it into the swirls and push it around into all of the crevices. Leave with a glass on top, in a warm place, to dry out overnight.



STEP 8

Thread a jet AB2X crystal onto a head pin, then a pearl and then another jet AB2X crystal. Trim the head pin to size using wire cutters and turn the end over into a hook using round nose pliers. Make another crystal and pearl dropper in the same way.



STEP 9

Thread the large jump ring through the enamel swirl piece and then through the fish's tail. Thread the droppers onto a jump ring, attach to a second jump ring, then thread through the lower hole on the enamel swirl piece. Finally thread the pendant onto a long chain.

DESIGNER TIPS

- Epoxy colours can be mixed together to achieve a variety of different shades.
- Allow resin mix to sit for ten minutes before using so that air bubbles can escape.