



The bead is made with translucent polymer clay, tinted with sapphire ink and silver foil.

The wire is sterling silver, 18 gauge, hand-shaped and lightly hammered.

The accent beads are "silver" and glass.

It was sanded starting at 400 grit paper and graduating up to 1500 grit. It was then buffed on a bench grinder using a muslin wheel.

It took about fifteen minutes of sanding and ten minutes of buffing.

No finish was applied.

How I tinted and cased and rolled out a polymer clay focal bead...

1. Start with a walnut sized ball of translucent clay. I used Katopolyclay™



2. Tint the clay with one drop of the color of ink you want to use. For the following instructions I used Chili Pepper Red Pinata Ink and let it dry on the surface. I blew it around to make it dry faster. It took about five minutes.



Here's the clay, with the ink about half-blended into the translucent. I chose to stop here so I'd get a bead with lots of color variation.

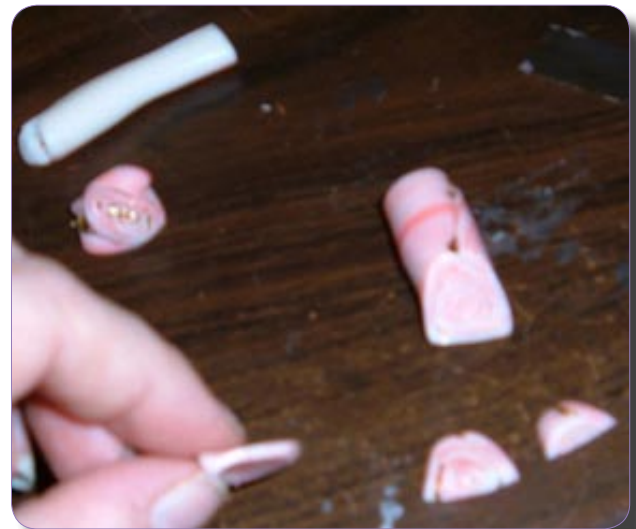


For the blue bead shown on the first page, I rolled the blue ink into the clay until it was well distributed.

3. Roll the blended clay into a PM1 thick sheet.
4. Apply a sheet of gold leaf to one side of the clay.



5. Crackle it slightly by running it through your clay machine on the next setting or by using a brayer or roller to thin it slightly and achieve the crackle.
6. Roll the sheet into a jelly roll and trim off the rough ends.
7. Below is a photo of the roll of clay, one end cut off and the first few slices. Note: I tinted the translucent clay too much so the white piece at the top is actually translucent tinted with less red ink. The lighter clay became the center of the bead.





The photo above from left to right - Left: The ends rolled out into a flat sheet; Center: A bead made from the extra tinted but barely marbled clay; Right: The slices cut from the jelly roll.

8. The egg-shaped bead after it is wrapped most of the way around with the flat sheet is shown in the photo below.



9. I put about 3 jelly roll slices on it and rolled it in my palms until the slices were fully integrated and smooth.
10. Use a fine needle to pierce the bead. Reshape it as necessary and let it rest.
11. Smooth the bead until you are happy with it.
12. Bake your bead under a foil tent to prevent scorching. I baked mine just under 300° for 30 minutes in a pre-heated oven. Follow your clay package directions.
13. I popped it into the freezer to cool for 15 minutes (just because I was in a hurry) and then sanded it progressively with 400, 800, 1000 and finally 1500 grit papers in a dish of water.
14. Next, I buffed the bead and assembled it.

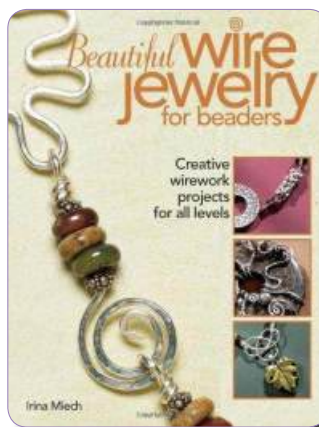
This is a close-up of the bead showing the jelly roll slices and the gold leaf. It has not been baked yet. I have no idea exactly what color it will turn out to be. The blue darkened a LOT in the oven, so I hope this will as well. I'd love to have a deep, rich ruby red.



instead of embedded like the blue/silver pin. I decided to topcoat with varathane rather than risk sanding it.



15. Here you see photos of the baked bead. There's lots of gold leaf on this one, all floating on the translucent clay



I've only done one wirework pin, the blue pin on the first page. I followed the instructions in the book "Beautiful Wire Jewelry for Beaders: Creative wirework projects for all levels" There are some really nice pieces in this book and I intend to keep practicing!