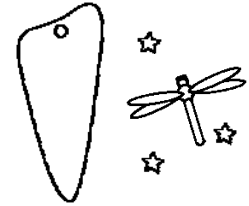


Thinking in Parts

Gordon K. Uyehara

Why Think in Parts?

- Joining is easy, take advantage
- A complex project can often be broken down into simple parts
- Allows for design flexibility
- Pieces can be shaped differently and refined before joining



How to Start

- Right Brain First
 - Creative brain storming
 - Play (with polymer clay, anything)
 - Use cutout shapes to play with an arrangement
 - Sketching – Can be simple
- Left Brain Next - all successful intermediate/advance projects require planning
 - Functionality (wearable issues) if necessary
 - Think ahead, visualize construction, how pieces fit together
 - Consider problems/solutions
 - Mind what you have learned, save you it will

Give Me Parts

- Stencils and Templates
 - Consistent and uniform shapes
 - Consistent thicknesses
- Make the foundation or main piece first (in most cases)
 - Most likely the biggest piece (efficient use of clay)
 - Other pieces connect to it
- Dry with shapes (coffee cups, light bulbs, etc.)
- Refining

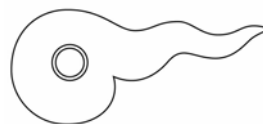
Joining Issues

- Hold that position (tape, cork clay, etc.)
- Strong joins
- Neat joins
- What happens during firing?
 - Shrinkage
 - Slumping
- Joining fired pieces w/Oil Paste
 - Avoids shrinkage issues
 - Requires more firings
 - Plan on not moving it before firing it

Simple Design Concepts for Metal Clay

Focal Point

Your eyes are drawn to the strongest component. If you find your interest comes to rest in an odd place, the piece may not be well balanced.



The strongest element draws your focus.



Balancing your design becomes difficult if you use too many components.

Symmetry / Asymmetry

If it can be split down the middle, resulting in a mirrored image, it is a symmetrical design. Note, asymmetrical does not mean unbalanced.



Symmetrical



Asymmetrical

Negative and Positive elements

Create interest mixing positive and negative spaces.



Transitions

Different surface treatments create areas of transition, adding interest. Use textures, finishing techniques, keum boo, colors, etc. to add variety and contrast.



Line Shapes

The shape of a line, or outline, can dictate feel or imply movement. Converging lines draw your focus. Patterns and shape can also suggest movement.



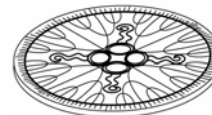
Harsh



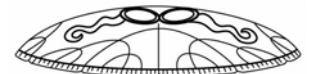
Flowing

Shaping

Adding dimension increases interest. Refinement increases realism. Hollow forms with visible interior areas are interesting.



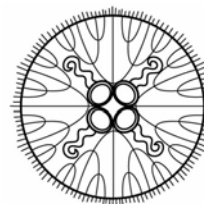
Jellyfish texture on a flat piece.



Domed to mimic a real creature.

Borrow from Nature

When in doubt, look to nature for inspiration. Don't have to copy an entire organism. Borrow just the texture or the shape or the color or even just a line. The solution to your design problem could be right outside your door and you won't get sued for copyright infringement.



Refine harsh edges for a more natural look.

Resources

- www.squidoo.com/preciousmetalclay/ (Margaret Schindel's comprehensive lens)
- groups.yahoo.com/group/MetalClay/ (Metal Clay Gallery Yahoo! group)
- Metal Clay Jewelry – projects, techniques, and embellishments (Louise Duhamel's unique book)
- www.tademagallery.com (beautiful period jewelry, no association)
- www.honudream.com (my stuff)

Notes