



another angle

with Angela Thompson

# Fantasy Floral String Pulls

on behalf of [tinypandora.com](http://tinypandora.com)



You will need the following supplies:

- Polymer clay in black or white, 2 oz or less
- Sculpey Liquid clay in White (or pearl), Red, Blue, Yellow and Clear
- Sculpey clay softener
- A length of thread or thin/fine string, about 8 inches
- Lisa Pavelka Magic-Glos (available at [tinypandora.com](http://tinypandora.com))
- Bar pin or necklace bail or other component to complete jewelry piece
- Painters or masking tape
- Small oven-safe flat bottomed item like a votive or condiment cup
- Usual clay supplies : oven, tile, etc
- Cutters or tissue blade to free form shapes
- Small cups and mixing sticks/stir stickes/etc

#### Step One:

Condition your clay thoroughly and roll out on your thickest setting. Using your cutters or free form , cut out your desired shapes. I usually do these in batches because this technique is so much fun you'll want to do more than one! Bake according to manufactures recommendations and allow to cool before proceeding.



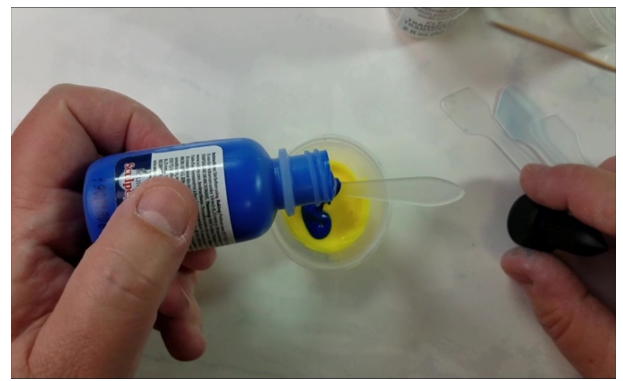
#### Step Two:

Mixing your liquid clay colors and having those colors in the proper consistency is key for this type "painting" to work. **You must STIR your Sculpey liquid clays prior to use.** Scrape the bottom of the bottle and stir until smooth. After you're thoroughly stirred them, start by pouring a small amount of the Sculpey liquid clay in primary yellow into a small cup. A little goes a long way. The amount shown is probably more than you'll need!





Add a couple drops of blue and stir till combined. You want two shades of green, so do the same thing again, using more or less blue on the second cup to get a lighter/darker shade of green.



This is my darker shade of green. Now decide what color(s) you want to use and mix those as well. For example, if you want purple flowers you'd mix a small amount of red with the blue. Each color you want to use will need it's own little pot and stir stick. For the examples I've shown, I used a pallet of yellow, blue, red and two shades of green.



Once all of your colors are mixed, you'll need to adjust the viscosity of each color. We want the colors to be as similar in viscosity to one another as possible. This will allow them to work together and stay separate at the same time. To adjust the viscosity, you'll add Sculpey Liquid Clear.



You'll notice when you start mixing the liquid clays that some are a bit thinner and some are thicker in consistency. The amount of Sculpey liquid clay Clear you add will be dependent upon how thick your current mixture is. Use the Clear to get all of the pots to a similar flow.

Start with one of your greens and add a small amount of Sculpey liquid Clear to the pot. Stir until well combined. You want the liquid to flow off of your stir stick like it does in the image to the right. It should cause a slight "pile" as it comes off the stick that smooths out within a couple seconds. You're only adding the Clear at this point, not the softener. A good comparison of the thickness you're aiming for would be warmed honey. Repeat this process with all of your colors. Once all of your colors are mixed, add 2 drops of the softener into each cup and stir well.

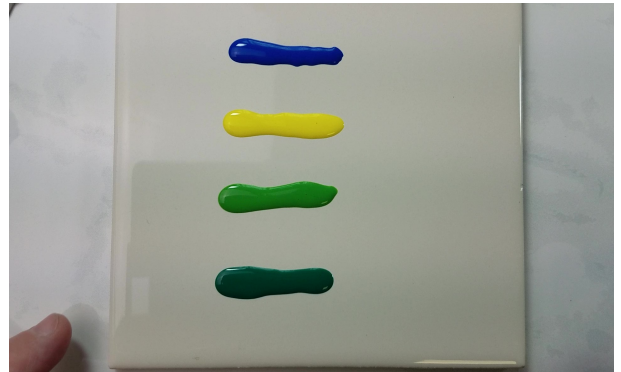


Now you'll need to mix your white/pearl color. This will be used as a base to work your string pulls on. In all of my examples I'm working on top of a 50/50 mix of white and pearl. You'll add a small amount of liquid clear to this cup as well, but do NOT add softener. Softener is not used in the white/base mix. Ideally your white/pearl color should be slightly thicker than your colors. Aim for a consistency similar to half and half.



### Step Three:

Using a tile or other work surface pour out thin lines of each of your colors. You do not need all of each color at once. You can reapply. It's easier to dip your thread/string into the colors this way. Leave the white/pearl in the pot.



### Step Four:

Prepare your oven safe vessel (this can be anything that is flat on both the top and bottom and is a good size for your oven.) This should be an item that you don't mind liquid clay dripping on to. A metal or glass vessel is easiest to peel excess clay off of once cured. The item pictured is a steel condiment cup. I purchased a set of 12 for \$6 from Amazon.



Take a piece of painters or masking tape about three inches long and fold it back on itself so that you have the sticky side up. You'll use the tape to secure your base to the vessel you'll use for baking. Like the image to the right.





### Step Five:

Preheat your oven. You'll want to cure these pieces as they are finished. It's not a good idea to leave them sitting before baking. The longer they sit the more the colors will bleed into each other and you'll lose the distinction.

Sculpey recommends baking the colors at 300 degrees for 15 minutes per 1/4 inch thickness and the Clear has a baking temperature of 325 for maximum clarity. My recommendation, ***based upon my experience and only regarding this technique***, is to bake the pieces at 300 degrees for 20 minutes. Make sure that you TENT your pieces with foil.

You'll notice in my examples that I am using a base of a very light color. It's actually a mix of 50/50 Premo White and Premo Accents Pearl. Even though the clay itself has a baking temperature of 275 the clay is stable enough to exceed that temperature recommendation as long as it's tented. You can see by my examples that I experienced no scorching, burning or darkening of my pieces. I use two oven thermometers and monitor my oven closely. Please use your own judgement based upon your experience with your oven.

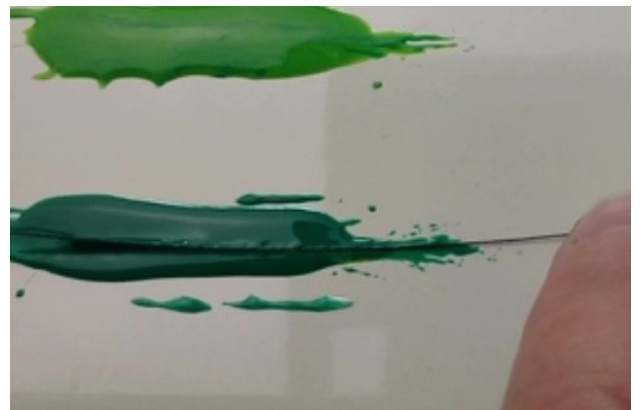
### Step Six:

Press your base into the tape, securing it to the vessel. Wipe the top of the base with an alcohol wipe or paper towel to remove any finger oils or residue and allow to dry. Then apply a coating of your white/pearl color, covering the entire surface. This coating should be a thick enough to completely cover the base surface but not so thick that it drips off the edges.



### Step Seven:

Start by holding your thread taut and dipping the thread into your darkest green. You only need to focus on the middle section of thread, the extra inches on the ends are for holding it. You will want to use a piece of thread that is 6-8 inches or longer, depending upon the size of your base. The thread should be roughly two to three times the length of your base. You need to be able to hold it comfortably. Dip the center section of the thread into the darker green clay, moving it back and forth as needed to "load" liquid clay onto the thread.

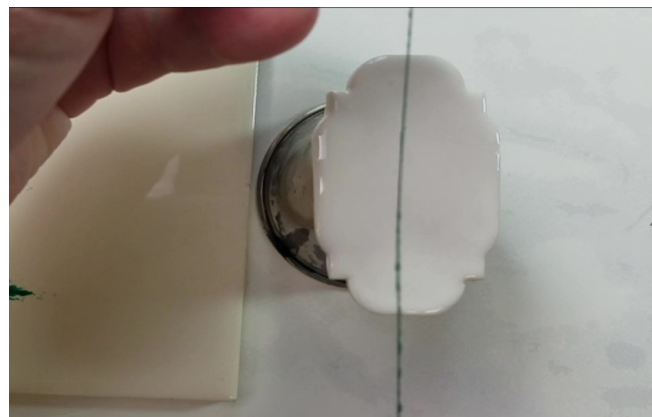


When you lift your thread you should see little drops of colored clay clinging to the thread.

Design choices are up to you. I'm going to show you two different variations of this technique. The video that accompanies this PDF (available at Studio Cryptique on You Tube) shows an additional four variations as well as a two ways to finish the cabochons! So make sure you watch it! Oh, did I mention there's a video that goes more in depth!!?

Gently lay the thread down onto the surface of the base. You'll see little pops of color come off of the thread and spread into your coating of white liquid clay.

See the little dots of green? They don't look much like leaves yet... but watch! Gently pull the thread towards you... just fractionally, a little tiny movement. And there's the magic! Your thread comes down the center of the dot, dragging the clay a wee bit south and elongating what was a dot into a neatly divided heart-ish shape. Or, in this context, leaves! Now lift your thread from the top, pulling it out of the clay and down towards the base in one motion. It's a whole lot more difficult to explain than to do. Try it, you'll see very quickly how it works. If you don't like the way it looks, wipe/scrap off the offending section, lay down more of your white color and try again! Go watch that video for a birds eye view of this process!



Continue adding additional lines of the dark green.



And more lines.



Continue adding the dark green until you're happy with the look.



Then start adding the contrasting lighter green.





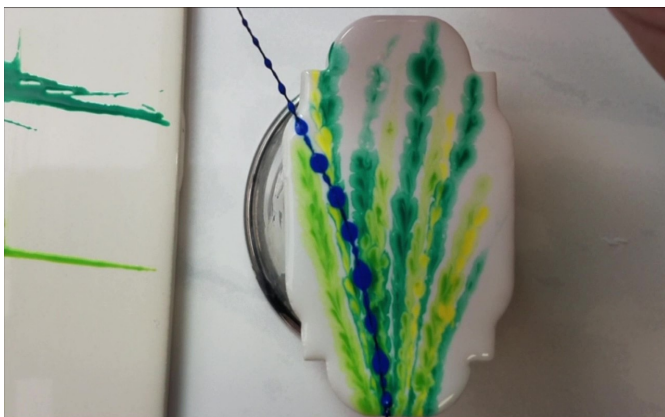
Continue layering the lighter green.



Now add some yellow. You're using the same dip, drop, pull motion with all of the colors here. Just build up your floral base.



Now I'm going to add my "flowers". Again, it's the same dip, drop, pull to form the flowers



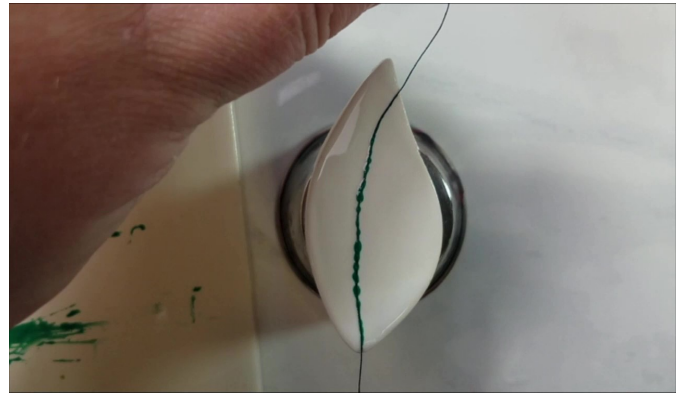
More blue, and done! I don't typically wipe my thread between colors, I just keep layering the colors onto the thread. If you'd like less blending, wipe your thread with a paper towel between colors.



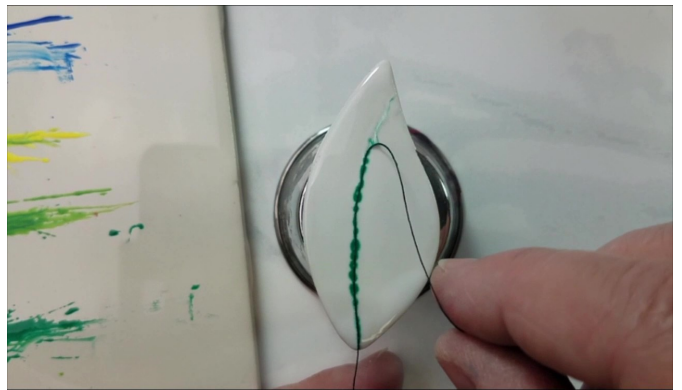
Front and back of the finished piece. The finish on this piece is Magic-Glos by Lisa Pavelka, available at [tinypondora.com](http://tinypondora.com)



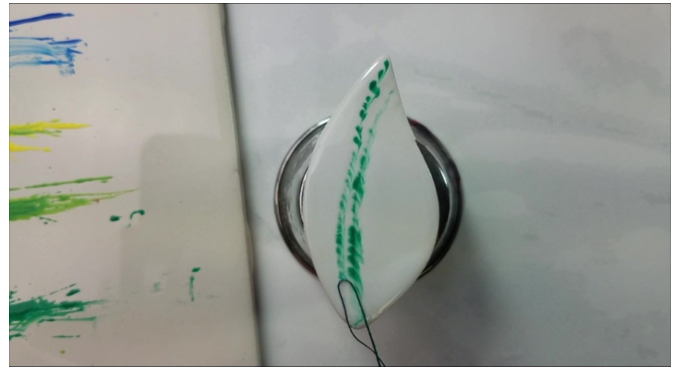
Let's do another one! Attach your base to a vessel and give it a nice coating of your white. Load your string with your darker green and place your first line of foliage.



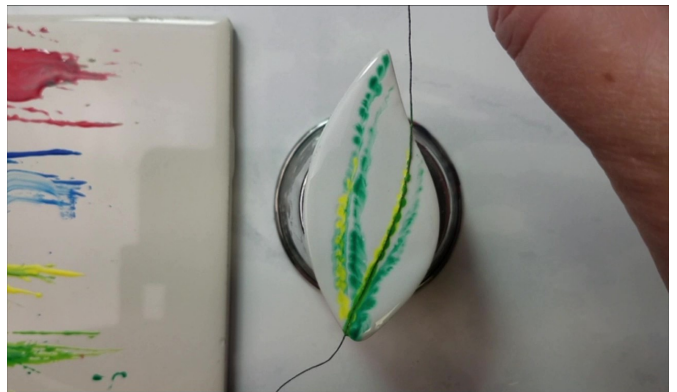
Now this is a different pull. For this one I wanted long, tall stalks instead of leaves. So, lay it down and then pull it from the top down on itself. You want to keep the thread moving downward pretty close to the line you made for the foliage.



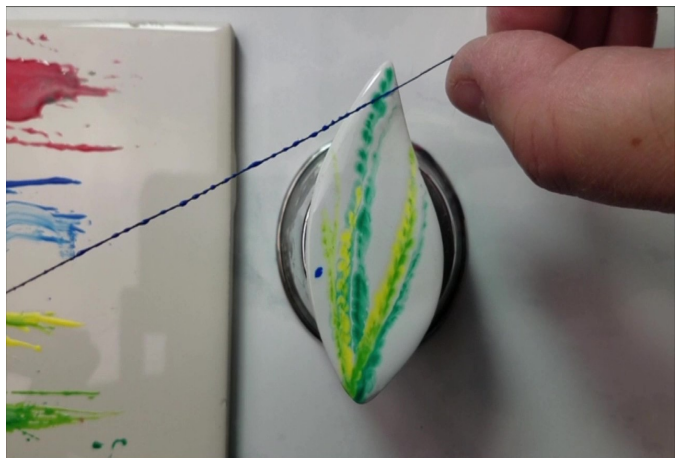
You'll get a more stalk-ish look like this.



Add in a another dark green line and than a couple yellow or lighter green accents.

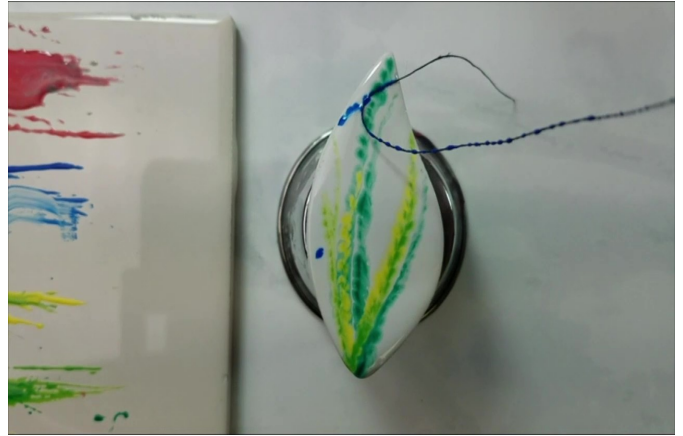


Now load your thread with your flower color. Starting at the top of the piece, lay your thread down in an S type style. See the next few photos for a close up of what I mean.

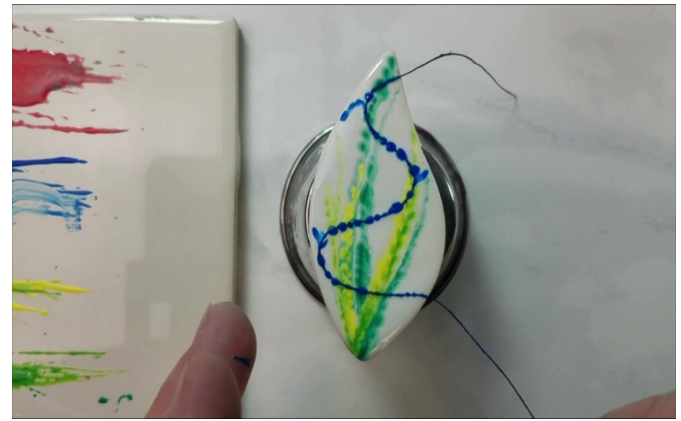




Start your curve.

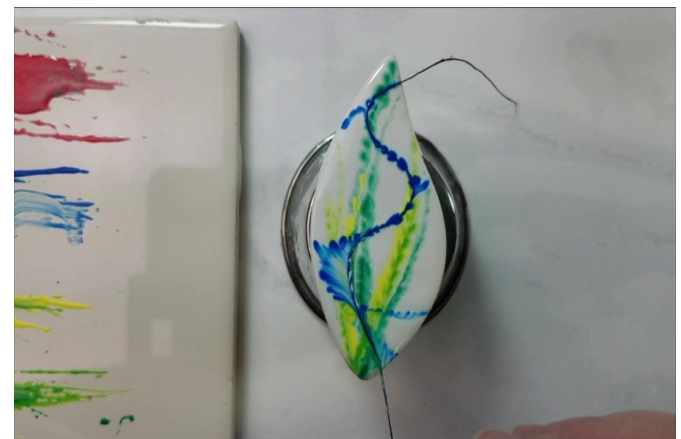


Yes, our S has an extra curve... that's just how we roll. Don't worry if you get little spots of color outside of your thread pattern. This is a very forgiving technique.

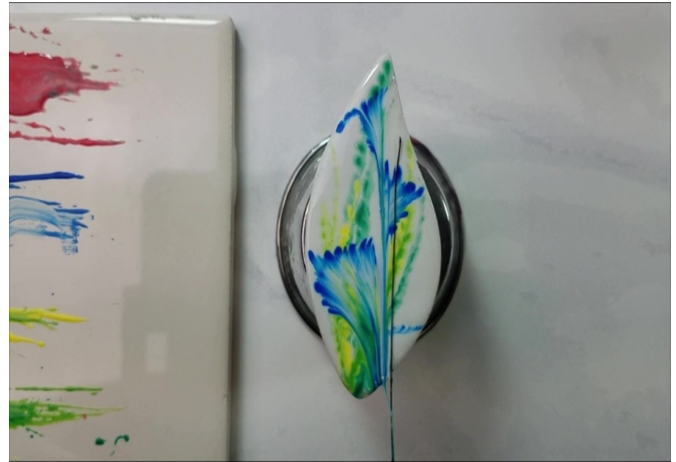


Now take the end (the one at the bottom) of your thread and pull it straight down towards you, dragging the thread through the liquid clay. All in one smooth motion.

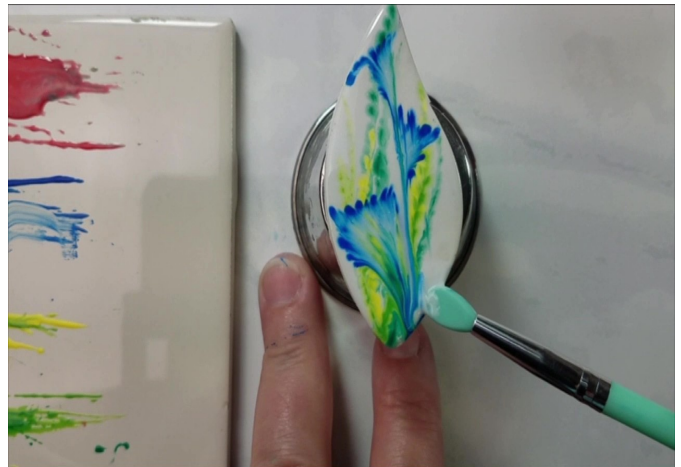
Don't worry, it's just clay, you're the boss here! If you don't like how it turns out, you can always wipe it off and try again :)



Pulling that thread through, look what happens!



I didn't like that tiny little blue line on the bottom right, so I just used my silicone tool and scraped it off. Then I added a drop of the white to the area and allowed it to flow into place. The liquid clay wants to move, so it's an easy thing to manipulate. It will flow into any open space and it will also self level. Liquid clay is awesome stuff!



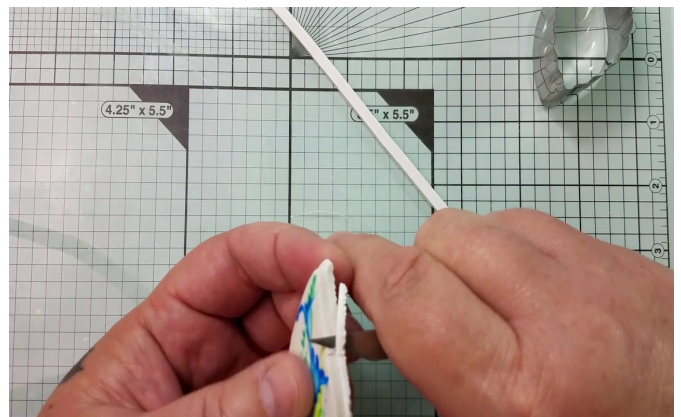
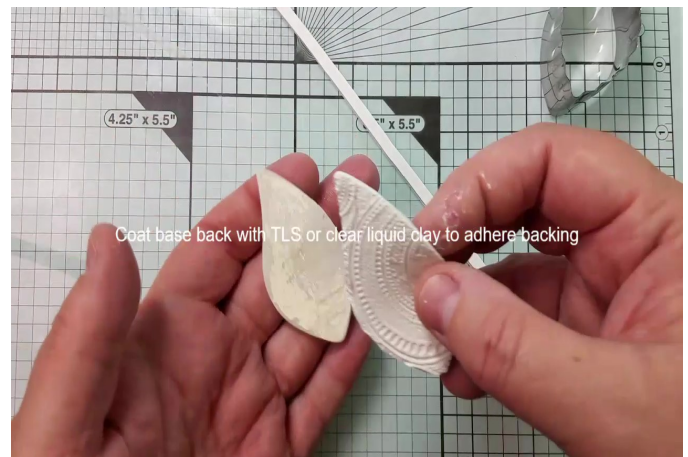
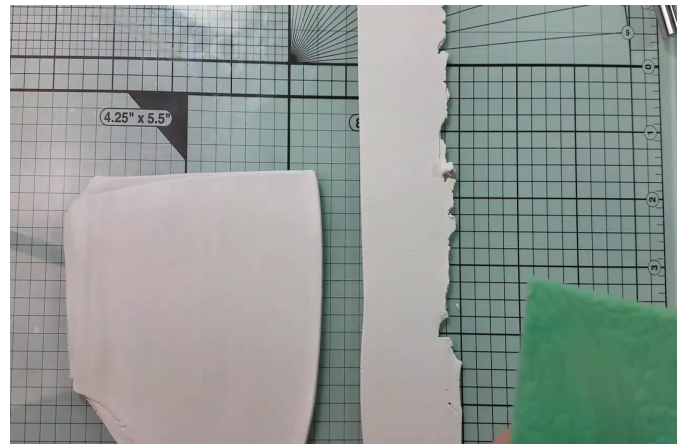
Now bake your piece(s) and I'll show you one method of finishing this piece and making it into wearable art.

### Step Eight:

Condition and roll out on your thickest setting your choice of clay for the reverse side. I use the same color as my base but you can use whatever color works with your design! You'll want a piece large enough to cover the back and another long thin strip piece to cut out the trim. Cut out your base shape and a strip for the trim. Measure the thickness of the base plus the thickness of your backing to determine how wide your strip will need to be. RJCrafts makes a neat little clay strip cutter using two blades and magnets, btw! You can also find dual blade Exacto cutters on Amazon.

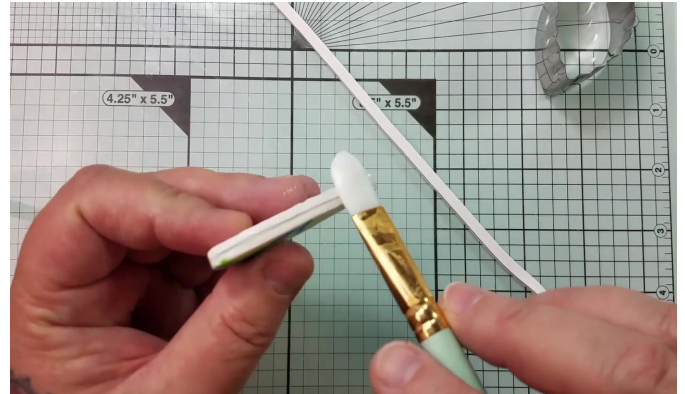
Apply a bit of liquid clay to the back of the baked base. Then apply your backing and texture as desired.

Trim any overhang.

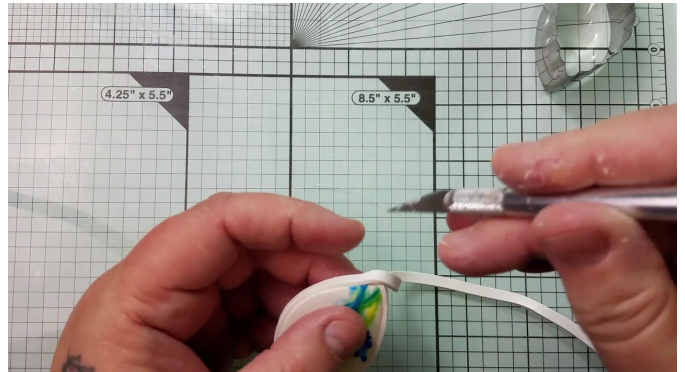




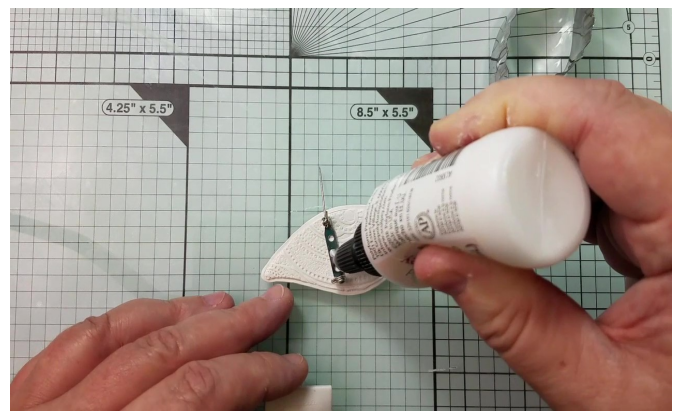
Apply a light coating of liquid clay to the edges.



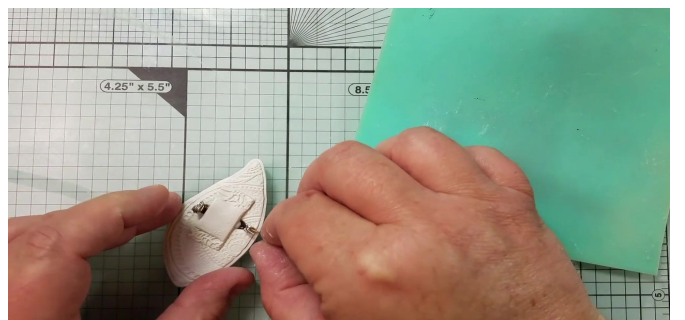
Wrap your strip all around the edge and trim/join ends.



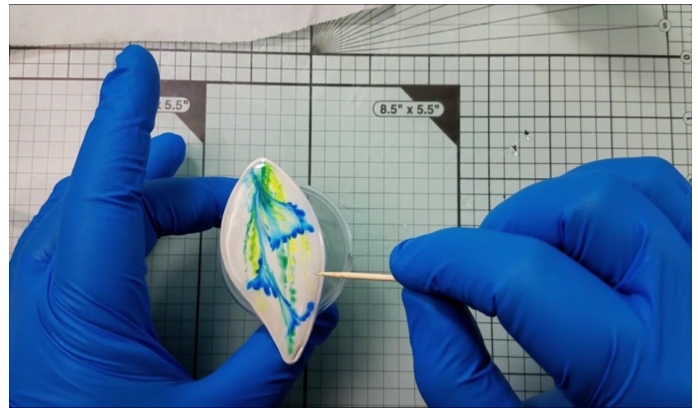
Center a bar pin to the back and press into the clay. Add a couple drops of liquid clay to the top (fill in holes) and then add another textured piece of clay over the top of the pin to secure.



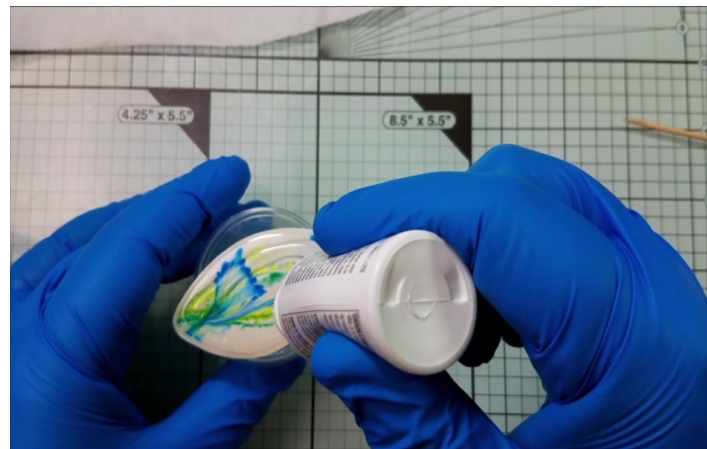
Bake your pin for one hour, tented and allow to cool.



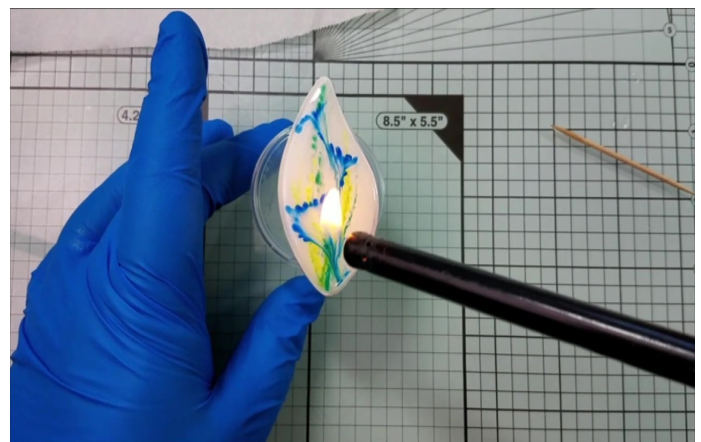
Apply the Lisa Palveka Magic-Gloss to the other edges and cure for 10 minutes. Sometimes the edges will pull away because the resin is self doming. Doing the outline prevents it from pulling away while you're filling in the rest.



Fill in the rest of your piece with the Magic-Glos. You can use a toothpick to pull the resin over the edge you made and it will blend flawlessly.



Resin can contain air bubbles. I suggest that you use a lighter and pass the flame quickly over the surface. This will pop any air bubbles in the resin. Then cure your resin under a UV lamp for 20 minutes.







I hope you find this technique fun and enjoyable!  
We'd love to see what you make! Post it on HOP!

oh Yeah!!! Did I mention that there's a video tutorial for  
this technique at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCrADHMOVKkylfKoyLdGDqtPA>

