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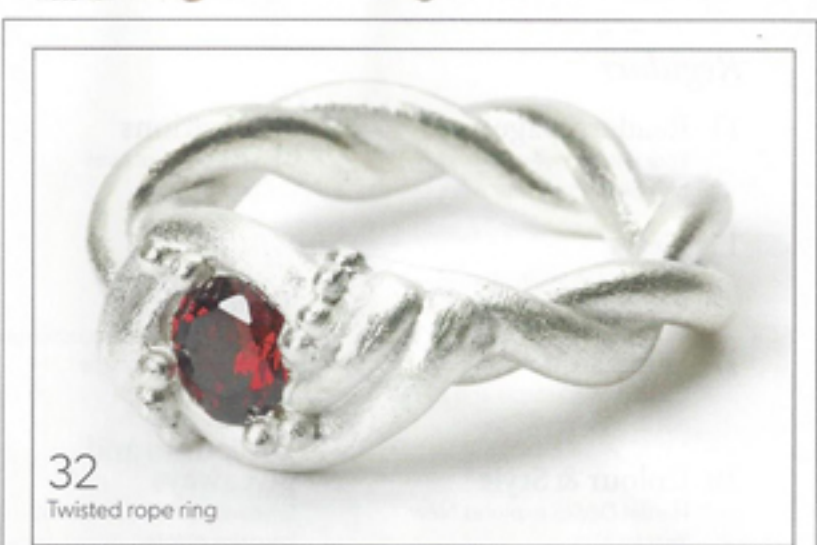


12 Frozen lakes

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44 Icy frozen waterfall



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26 Moonlit ice bracelet



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Project | Easy



TWISTED ROPE RING

Explore the properties of the new PMC Flex silver clay with this stone-set twisted ring. *By Julia Rai*

Julia is co-director of the Cornwall School of Art, Craft and Jewellery where she teaches a variety of classes. She holds the prestigious Metal Clay Masters Registry credential at level four.

Launched in September, PMC Flex is a new silver clay with a much longer working time in the wet stage. It also remains flexible after drying. It fires the same as PMC3, has the same shrinkage and is compatible with both PMC and Art Clay, allowing you to combine it with these clays in the same project.

MATERIALS

- 15g PMC Flex
- Silver metal clay paste
- 5mm cubic zirconia
- Makin's extruder
- 1mm extruder dye
- Tape measure
- Teflon sheet
- Sticky tape
- Sharp craft knife
- Rubber tipped clay shaper
- Ring mandrel and stand
- Good quality paintbrushes
- Fibre blanket
- Tumble polisher

RESOURCES

PMC Flex, syringe and paste:
www.bluebelldesignstudio.co.uk
Cubic zirconia: www.pajed.co.uk

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DON'T MISS!

Next month *Jade Cameron's Aztec copper clay earrings*



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STEP 1
Measure your finger with a ring sizer then add two sizes to account for the metal clay shrinkage. Slide the ring sizer on to the mandrel and draw a line on each side of the size guide. Wrap greaseproof paper or Teflon around the mandrel over the pencil lines and secure it with sticky tape. You will build your ring on this so that it doesn't stick to the mandrel.



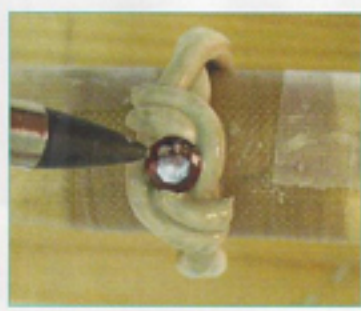
STEP 2
Use a tape measure to measure the length of the ring from the mandrel. Select a dye for the extruder that has a hole 1mm in diameter. Oil the inside of the extruder barrel and the dye. Form the PMC Flex into a fat sausage and load this into the extruder barrel. Screw on the dye and extrude a snake of clay twice the length of the ring measurement.



STEP 3
Extrude another snake the same length as your first snake. Hold both ends of the snakes and twist them together so they form a neat and even twisted rope. Carefully form the rope around the mandrel, making sure it is snug underneath. Be careful not to flatten the rope as you do this. The rope should overlap at the top of the mandrel and lie alongside the shank.



STEP 4
Curl the ends of the rope around each other at the top of the ring to form a loose bezel for the stone. Cut off the ends at an appropriate length using a sharp craft knife. Use a damp paintbrush to smooth the ends and ensure they are making good contact with the shank of the ring and each other. Check the shank to make sure it's stuck together.



STEP 5
While the clay is still wet and pliable, place the stone into the opening at the top of the ring. Use a rubber-tipped clay shaper to push the stone down into the clay, making sure the stone is well embedded. For the clay to grip the stone during firing, the stone table should be flush with the top of the clay bezel. Dry the ring on the mandrel.



STEP 6
While the ring is drying, form some tiny metal clay balls for embellishment. Set these aside to dry. Remove the dry ring from the mandrel and use a small amount of syringe to set the ball embellishment around the stone. Clean up as necessary with a damp paintbrush and allow the ring to dry. Clean paste and dust off the stone and fire at 900°C for two hours. Polish as normal.

Extra Projects Make earrings and a charm

EARRINGS

Make a pair of twisted rope earrings using the same method as the ring. Simply extrude thinner snakes and form a ring at the top to hang on earwires.

CHARM

You can also make a cute little charm using exactly the same method, but by tying a knot into a length of twisted rope.

Designer tips

- If you want dry PMC Flex to remain flexible, allow it to air dry or dry with a very low, gentle heat.
- To sand or drill PMC Flex, dry it at 150°C for 20 minutes in an oven. It will then behave like regular dry fine silver clay.
- Dried PMC Flex is great for making appliqué embellishments for your metal clay creations. Roll it out one or two cards thick, dry and then cut with a craft knife or use a paper punch or a digital cutting machine.



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