The *Soda Lime Times* is a monthly online magazine written by lampworkers, for lampworkers. It is published on the 15th of each month and is written with the novice to intermediate level beadmaker in mind, although most advanced beadmakers also find it informative and entertaining.

We published our first edition in July of 2011 and have been offering that one free so that our readers can see what the magazine has to offer before subscribing. We have come to realize that the July, 2011 issue just doesn’t do the magazine justice as it has evolved and improved over the months. We have assembled the *Soda Lime Times Greatest Hits* to replace it.

Included here you will find features from the various months we have published so far, and therefore it is representative of what you will receive if you subscribe, beginning with the beautiful opening pages from the March, 2012 issue on floral beads. Each month the *Soda Lime Times* contains an opening article with inspirational eye candy by some very talented bead artists, a featured artist biography, informative articles relating to the creation and marketing of beads, the Grubby Mitts Report (which is a column about things you really must have) and several tutorials. Most months also contain Tut Talk, which is a tutorial review. Every edition has at least one tutorial for a bead suitable for Beads of Courage.

There are two ways to get the *Soda Lime Times*. You can subscribe for $4.95 per month or you can purchase back issues without a subscription for $6.95 per month. Subscriptions are on a month-to-month basis, so you can cancel at any time. All subscription payments are processed through PayPal, making your payments very secure. When you subscribe you can purchase back issues for the subscriber price of $4.95 per issue, so being a subscriber does have its perks.

Each month on the 15th we send an e-mail to our subscribers announcing the new *Soda Lime Times* is ready and it is as easy as following a link to our website to download it. The current month is available 24/7 until we replace it with a new issue on the 15th of the next month.

Keeping track of your magazines is also easy. Simply save the PDFs to a special file on your computer or onto a disk. You can print out as much of each edition as you like. Because the magazine is in PDF format, all of the links are active, allowing you to navigate away from it and go exploring while you read.

Thank you so much for your interest in the *Soda Lime Times*, and if you have any questions, comments or suggestions we would be happy to hear from you at diane@sodalimetimes.com.

Warmest regards,

Diane Woodall/Managing Editor
Flowers are everywhere! If we can create it, we seem compelled to adorn it with flowers. As glass artists, we are blessed to work in a medium that can so perfectly capture the beauty of flowers, preserving their splendor in pristine form for all time. Glass is, quite simply, an ideal medium with which to create flowers.

Without question, one of the most gifted floral beadmakers in the world is Angela Brackrogge, a German flameworker who is a real life glass whisperer. Her flowers are so realistic it is difficult to imagine that they are actually wearable beads.
Angela enjoys capturing the beauty of nature in her work. She explains, “My glass art reflects the beauty and character of Italy, with feelings of romance, warm sun, and nature. I strive for an elegant style. I prefer harmonious color combinations in connection with silver or high-grade steel. I am fascinated with glass; the counterplay of fragility and immortality of the object... one must experience it to truly understand!”

Sculptural floral beads are not all realistic in form. While not technically beads, the creations of Sara Sally LaGrand are just too engaging not to include in this showcase. Sara creates her glass components on the end of wire and then fashions them into glass corsages over a wire base. (photos below)

It is impossible to imagine something so fanciful springing from an artist’s imagination alone. For Sara, her art is inspired by her childhood memories. She shares, “The pieces reflect many influences, probably too many to mention here, but the roots are in classic American floral design. My mother was a florist. As a kid, however, I was more interested in the seed pods, vines, mushroom and fungus type shapes that grew in the most unspoiled parts of the woods.”

Another artist who creates fanciful floral beads is Karen Leonardo, a friend to many in the lampworking community and the inventor of the Leonardo Petal Puller and Imprinter tools. Karen does not attempt to copy nature when making her floral beads, but interprets it in a fresh, new way. “Flowers are so lovely and feminine. They make a connection with nature and bring us back to the essence of life and what beauty really is. My customers love the flowers and feel pretty wearing them too.” (photos below)
Indeed, who wouldn’t feel prettier wearing a lovely floral bead? **Kristen Frantzen Orr** not only captures the natural beauty of flowers, but her talent for selecting colors makes her beads both soothing and exciting to look at. Kristen explains, “When I started making beads in 1993, most people were making dot beads and a few people were making aquarium beads. When I poked the center of a group of dots, I saw a flower appear, and I made encased florals for several years. I liked the freedom of doing those flowers as opposed to the engineered precision needed for really fine dot beads.

When I saw paperweights made by Barry Sautner, I wanted to try to make something with surface decoration. I took as many workshops as I could (and still do). Techniques that I learned evolved into my own ways of doing things. Early on, Loren Stump and Leah Fairbanks were big influences. Floral beads remain my favorites to make because I like the freedom of shaping and placing flower imagery on the beads; I love mixing colors; and I am ever fascinated with the illusion of capturing and reflecting light.” (photos below)

Surface decoration is an integral part of many floral beads because humans have an innate desire to reach out and touch. Because of the nature of glass, our work can be highly textured or smooth as silk. **Kim Fields** creates beads that simply cry out to be touched, as if it isn’t enough to experience them with your eyes alone. Her beads blend color and texture in a way that gives them a lifelike quality. (photo left)

Kim shares this about her work, “Nature has always informed and inspired my creativity, and it is the primary influence for my beads. Through the colors and textures of each bead design, I strive to capture a small reflection of nature’s beauty. I believe that every detail matters, and my goal is to meld all the intricacies of each bead into a cohesive whole. For me, flameworking is an accretive process that often leads me to unexpected places.”
The photos to the right are two more examples of Kim’s lifelike beads; further proof that it really is possible to paint with glass if you possess enough talent and skill.

“Painting” with glass is exactly what I think of when I look at Katherine Wadsworth’s beads. Many of Katherine’s beads are just two colors, with the background etched to a soft matte finish and the flowers in the foreground left raised. Simple perfection. (photos below)

How does Katherine attain the balance between simplicity and complexity? She explains, “When I make floral designs, I am often just trying to capture the basic character of a flower, not necessarily create a truthful portrait. I try to portray a certain line, prickliness, and color that can make you look at what is really just very tiny bits of glass and think, ‘that is a Bird of Paradise,’ or see a soft and gentle rounded form with no color at all and still think ‘oh, a cherry blossom!’

A lot of my practice and what I try to teach is how to reduce an image to its minimum—what is the least that is needed to show you what this really means. Then once you have figured out how to make the essence of the form you can add back more complexity and detail if you want to and still not lose your form. It is really quite a trick to try to make something as complex and beautiful as a flower show up and speak clearly to people using just little bits of liquid glass. Of course, it’s a trick artists have been pulling off for many centuries with thread, or paint, or other media. But it is a fantastic challenge to do the trick with fire, and that keeps me hooked.”

Glass may be a more challenging medium than paint or thread, but the results of our efforts are that the art we make can endure when other mediums cannot stand the test of time. Indeed, glass has another unique quality that allows us to do something that simply isn’t possible with other mediums. We can encase elements under a layer of clear glass, allowing the viewer to see a smooth object that, when viewed closer, contains its own little world beneath the glass. Let’s see a painter make an encased floral!
Two artists immediately come to mind when you imagine encased floral beads, Jeannie Barnard and Ayako Hattari. Each creates miniature worlds beneath the glass, and yet their artistic styles are completely their own. Jeannie’s beads are a modern mix of organic and romantic, a completely new take on a traditional floral bead.

Jeannie explains, “I enjoy the challenge of solving the puzzle of how to create a certain element or effect with glass. It intrigues me to look at other lampworkers creations and break down into steps how their bead was created. The mystery of why glass reacts in a particular way when it comes into contact with another glass, or exposed to certain conditions, is fascinating.

Lately I have been working with my 3-D flowers on one side of the bead and contrasting that with a primitive, organic, floral surface decoration on the other. I guess in a way, I am trying to let myself have the best of both worlds. The 3-D flower side interests me because I love the realism and the movement that can be expressed with a creation of nature. But I also love patterns that are created with organic effects and primitive floral designs. I want to experience all of that in one bead.” (photos left)

On the other end of the spectrum is Ayako Hattari, whose floral beads are based on traditional Japanese designs. While Ayako’s designs may be traditional, she adds her own unique flair to her work. She creates her beads with Satake glass, which has a higher COE than 104 COE, and is leaded so that it also has a higher viscosity. Satake glass enables Ayako to create her highly detailed flowers. She explains, “I like the encasing techniques of the Japanese style of beadmaking. I plunge, rake, or spread cut murrini on the bead base. It makes my flowers and leaves appear real. I especially love to spread flower murrini. It almost seems as if I can make the flowers bloom inside the beads. The viscosity of lead glass is very good for these techniques.” (photos below)
I always like to end with something sweet, and **Lynn Bauter’s** flower beads always bring such a smile to my face. Each one is like a miniature garden in full bloom. Lynn says, “If I can bring a smile to someone’s face when they see my little glass flowers then I have accomplished what I set out to do when I taught myself the art of lampwork. Who can look at a pretty bouquet and not smile?”

I hope that these lovely beads will inspire you to create some flower beads of your own. Florals can be challenging, and it takes practice, but seeing this beautiful showcase of beads is proof that when you combine imagination, desire, and determination, your glass garden will bloom!

“**Flowers are the sweetest things God ever made, and forgot to put a soul into.**”


**Thanks to our contributors:**

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**Want To See More Flowers?**

Thought you might. Now would be a good time to top off your coffee and settle in for some “me” time as you enjoy the following collages featuring flower beads that are sure to make your creativity bloom.

Thanks to the talented artists who contributed beads for the collages. May your flames burn bright!
Top row left and right: Jacqueline Parkes
http://www.gemsinbloom.etsy.com
Top row middle and lower right inset: Carolyn Conley
http://www.carolynsbeads.etsy.com
Second row left and right: Lisa Fletcher
http://www.lisafletcher.etsy.com
Center photo (nest): Harriet Harrison
http://www.kybeadmaker.com/index2.php
Upper left inset: Kaye Husko http://www.koregon.etsy.com
Upper right inset: Susan Elliot http://www.doodletart.com

Third row left: Jennifer Milsap
http://www.highlandbeads.etsy.com
Lower left inset: Lorna Prime http://www.pixiewillow.etsy.com
Third row right: Dolly Ahles
http://www.flamedancerbeads.com/
Bottom row left: Susan Elliot http://www.doodletart.com
Bottom row middle: Deanna Chase
http://www.cdlampwork.etsy.com
Bottom row right: Laney Mead http://www.izzybeads.etsy.com
I met Ali VandeGrift in Louisville, KY at the 2011 ISGB Gathering Bead Bazaar. As I browsed the Smoky Mountain Firecracker’s table, my eyes feasted on some of the most stunning beads in the room. Those gals possess some serious talent! Standing behind the table was a beautiful young woman whose beads literally took my breath away. It is rare to see “in real life” beads made with this level of detail and skill, and quite another to learn that they were made by a 23-year old beadmaker. I knew immediately that I wanted to feature Ali in the Soda Lime Times. So you see, Ali is the “young” component in this month’s theme “Young at Heart”.

Yes, compared to many people in the beadmaking world, twenty-three year old Ali is young. Despite her tender age, she has been making beads since she was sixteen years old and is quite the veteran. The jewelry bug bit her when she was just a teenager. She explained, “I have been interested in jewelry my entire life...wearing it...making it. When I was in high school, I made hemp jewelry and I sold at so many craft shows and flea markets, it was absolutely ridiculous! That led me to meet local beadmaker, Chris Coffman.

For a long time, I bought lampwork beads from Chris to include in my own jewelry creations. She was the jump-off point to my glass career, and she encouraged me along the way. I ordered a beadmaking DVD and the cheapest lampwork kit ever. I set up a torch station on my mom’s patio on a folding card table that I packed up and put away every night. It was a very modest start and I don’t think I could have done it any other way.

Feeling pity for me in the winter, my mom allowed me to move my beadmaking table into the garage. After a year, I started taking classes with many awesome glass folks, including Tink Martin, Kimberly Affleck, Kim Fields, Caitlin Hyde, Leah Fairbanks, Linda Sacra, Andrea Guarino, Holly Cooper, and Brad Pearson. Each class helped to improve my skills.”

Like many people in the beadmaking world, Ali does not make beads full time, but she does work with glass 40 hours a week. Upon graduating high school in 2006, in the top 15% or her class, she received a full scholarship to a state community college and thus began her career in glass.

Ali said, “In the fall of 2005, I met some students from Salem Community College at Carlisle Machine Works. They talked highly of the programs at Salem, both the Scientific Glass Technology major and the Glass Art major. After visiting the school a few times and talking to some people in both fields, I decided that the SGT major worked best for me.

Art was never my thing, necessarily. I made beads because I liked the function in jewelry. Scientific glassblowing works well for me because I enjoy fabricating things for a specific end use.

I spent two years at Salem Community College, meeting a lot of random, hilarious, and (most of all) talented people who I will never forget, and learning a ridiculous amount about glass. My instructor, Don Hodgkins, took me under his wing, and with a lot of hard work, I graduated with a degree in Scientific Glass Technology, one of four graduates that year in my degree program and the only girl. This also made me a part of a very small demographic of glassworkers who are educated in glass on a higher level.
Fortunately, my degree brought me to my current life situation. I am a scientific glassblower at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, creating, modifying, and repairing glassware for research. My job is the best job in the world! I truly believe it. I get to work 40 hours a week with glass; can’t beat it.”

It is always fascinating to learn how an artist’s style evolves. For Ali, it was a gradual process. As she described it: “My work is not fully evolved. I know it is more recognizable and identifiable, but I am still working on having a more cohesive body of work where it all starts making more sense. I think the things that make me the beadmaker I am are the intensive scrollwork patterns and the size of my beads.

I am hoping to expand that further into some other patterns. It’s a gradual process. I have always sought after fine stringer skills, and that is the biggest aspect of my work today.

The most important part of having a style is having a strong set of skills behind it. Having been exposed to so much glassblowing for so long, the glassworkers with the strongest skill set have always been the ones that stand out the most to me.”

In a world where there are so many talented people, Ali certainly stands out for the sheer size of her beads. Some of Ali’s beads are glass behemoths. It is not unusual for her pendulum beads to be 90 millimeters in length!
Ali plans to devote more time to making larger beads. “Large beads are currently speaking to me, and I am trying to go as big as possible, while making sure I am not sacrificing structural qualities, shape, and design.

I decided that was an important quality that I have the skill for, so that's what I was going to work on.”

A few months ago, I took a class with Holly Cooper. Her work is incredible; small in size, yet amazing in detail. Somehow, on the drive back to Tennessee, I realized big beads need to exist too, and when I got home, I made a bead that weighed more than ¼ pound.

Does Ali have any advice for other beadmakers? “If you want it bad enough, it can happen. Work really hard. Love what you do, and stay modest. Everything else will work out how it should. As a person who took a leap of faith and dedicated herself to the material of glass, I can promise that anything is possible.”

To see more of Ali’s work, you can visit her Etsy store at: [http://www.aliveglass.etsy.com](http://www.aliveglass.etsy.com)
Steph’s Dot Tips
By Stephanie Handermann

There are many techniques we lampworkers attempt to master. It may be forming a particular shape, the mastery of stringer control, or in my case, (since I love dots) it is placing as many dots as possible on a bead. Because I have spent a lot of time practicing this, I have come to know a few things about dots. Some of this knowledge has come from other lampworkers, but mostly it came from practice, failure, and the knowledge of heat control. It is difficult to convey the complexity of how to place so many dots so this is a “TIPS” page rather than a step-by-step tutorial. All the basics needed to make controlled dots are below. Without the following tips, I wouldn’t be where I am today. Remember, EVERYONE has a FIRST dot!

Position Behind the Torch
When I started lampworking, I sat too high above my torch. It was not until I took a Kristina Logan class in 2008 and read Corina’s Passing the Flame book did I learn the correct position behind the torch. Those two things changed the way I sit. It is important to sit low enough so that you can see your bead straight on and not just from above.

I work with my torch flame tilted slightly up, but not too vertical. I sit so that my head looks almost straight at the flame. This way I am not bending my neck and causing pain. Positioning yourself so you are looking straight on, rather than looking too far down your bead will help combat the extreme neck pain some lampworkers experience. I need to be able to sit for 2-3 hours per bead. It took getting used to, but I made the switch.

To help with my position behind the torch I use a Creation Station (I bought mine from www.austinbluemoon.com). This is a great way to steady your hand so that you can place your dots. The bars on my station allow my forearm to rest so that I can concentrate on my bead rather than whether I am steady or not. There are many other armrests out there and I have tried some, but this works the best for me. See what works for you.

Stringers
When it comes to stringers, I pull more than enough of each color so that I do not run out. I also pull three different sizes so that I have options: hair thin, 1mm, and 2mm. The most important thing when pulling stringers is to have the right amount of heat. Wait a second out of the flame before pulling. There are plenty of stringer tutorials. The most important thing to me, when applying a dot, is heating the same amount of glass and using the same thickness of stringer.
**Heat Control**

If you are a new lampworker you probably struggle with heat control. Most “newbies” heat far too much and wayyyyyyy (yes those y's are needed) too long when in the flame. At other times, not enough heat can result in a cracked bead. If you keep your bead down near the candles, it will be too hot. You really want to shape your bead in the middle of the flame and keep your bead heated in the top 1/3 of the flame.

I know you are all nodding your heads right now. Heat control is the defining stage of learning to work with glass. In relation to dots, most new lampworkers either melt their dots in by mistake with too much heat or they pop off with too little heat. Heat control will help keep those dots where you want them. The two most important things to remember about heat control, in relation to dots are:

1) You must heat from all angles to anchor the dot without melting it in. Basically, you have to add insurance heat into your bead from all angles (left, straight on, right) in order for your bead not to crack. This also keeps heat radiating into those dots, as well, so they don’t pop off. The dots should never be narrower at the bottom or they *will* pop off.

2) You must always keep your bead turning in the upper one third of the flame after every 4-5 dots are applied. Give it a good heat bath!

**Adding Dots**

The most important factor when adding dots is the amount of glass you use. The amount of glass you heat will equal the size of your dot. When making dots, approach the flame slowly and touch the stringer into the flame the same amount of time and heat the same amount of glass for every dot.

Finally, placing a dot is deliberate and not something you wing. Rather than focusing solely on the spot where I am going to place the dot, I focus on the negative space in the row next to it--the dots next to the one I am going to place. It should be like a triangle, and I make sure to always keep that same spacing every time. I actually gaze at the space and not where I am putting the dot. When working on the first row of dots, I get into a rhythm and focus only on the space (that word again, meaning the empty area) I want to create between the dots as I go around (I go forward not backwards). I first learned this in a Kristina Logan class, and it is something that most artists repeat in their classes, as well. We all learn from one another and I am not quite sure who gets the first credit. However, it is the best advice I have received when it comes to precision placement.
Moving Dots
*IMPORTANT* When you encounter an error, do not forget to keep your bead warm while you are attempting to fix your error. If you don’t, your bead can crack and all of your work will be in vain.

If you have a dot that is a bit off, all you have to do is heat the dot for a split second, no more, and push or pull it in tiny increments with a stringer or tool to the right spot. If you heat any longer, the dot will be anchored and you will not be able to move it without affecting the other dots around it or the base of the bead. Never use too much heat or the dot will melt in.

Removing Dots
I remove dots in several ways. The first way is I immediately get the bead out of the flame. Since the dot is not anchored at this point you can use tweezers to just knock it off carefully. The second way is to use a tiny pair of scissors and cut the dot off at the base. You can use Cutter Bee scissors or any other tiny scissors.

However, if these two ways do not work and it is not coming off, I will use a pinpoint flame to heat just the dot and use pinpoint tweezers to remove a tiny bit at a time (the use of the word tiny is important here). You can also use a colored rod in the same color as the dot. Heat the dot, touch down with the cold rod, and pull carefully, flame cut. Repeat these steps until the dot is gone and you just see the base bead and space there. This is tricky because you do not want to heat anything else around the dot or you can distort your rows. Do not forget your insurance heat. Think baby steps, not wrecking steps!

Steady as She Goes
Making dot beads takes time and patience. Taking a class is always the best way to understand the process. Remember, if you truly love dots, you will find a way to accomplish it. It just takes time, patience, and knowledge.

Author Stephanie Handermann is a beadmaker and a teacher from Cincinnati, Ohio. She has been making beads for 5 years and is known for her highly detailed dot beads. She loves meeting new glassy people and her goal is to teach on a broader scale. Stephanie trained with many accomplished artists (Jim Smircich, Corina Tettinger, Kim Fields, Dustin Tabor, Stephanie Sersich, Kristina Logan, Jennifer Geldard, Andrea Guarino, Trey Cornette, and just recently, the very bright and talented Heather Trimlett).

You can visit her website and sign up to be notified of upcoming events and the addition of work as it becomes available.

http://www.stephaniehandermann.com
Middle of the Mandrel

The pros and cons of making beads in the middle of the mandrel

By Diane Woodall

Most beadmakers today make beads on the end of the mandrel, however some of us prefer to work in the middle. There are advantages and disadvantages to both techniques, but I believe that working in the middle, especially from the beginning, helps you to achieve balanced, well formed beads earlier on, and in the long-run will enable you to form beads more quickly and with less strain on your back and shoulders.

The most common argument I hear against working in the middle is that it is too difficult and time consuming to dip the mandrels. There is actually a simple way to do it, and here is how it’s done: Using a small container or a jar lid, mound the bead release slightly. The surface tension of the bead release will keep it mounded, but put a paper towel under the container to catch drips. Simply lay the mandrel in the bead release and then rotate it as you lift it out of the bead release. Tap the mandrel gently on the table before placing it in a sand-filled container to dry. When you are finished dipping mandrels, pour the remaining bead release back into the container, wipe out the little cup with the paper towel and you are done.

There are some kilns that are not designed for beads made in the middle, so if you have one of these kilns, you will have to work on the end or find a way to stack your beads in horizontally. I have a fire brick kiln that has a front flap and a perforated metal rack in the back where I can place my beads as they are made. Even with an interior size of only six inches by six inches, a mandrel with a bead in the middle fits nicely into a kiln like this. Chili Pepper kilns, on the other hand, make it more of a challenge if beads are in the middle.

When you work in the middle of the mandrel you are able to hold the mandrel with both hands. When you marver a bead on a torch marver, you can press with one hand and guide with the other. I use a torch marver or a Val Cox tabletop marver for all of my shaping and am able to roll and press using both hands. I can shape beads much more quickly than if I had the use of just one hand. Most beadmakers who make their beads on the end of the mandrel use a hand-held marver in one hand while holding the bead in the other. I agree that having the marver at eye level is beneficial and makes it easy to see your work. Again, you have to decide what works best for you.

Another advantage to working in the middle is that when you are applying a design to a bead you can flip the mandrel so that you are always working from the “easy” side. For right-handed people it’s the right. When applying dots I apply the dots to the middle (equator) and right side, flip the mandrel and apply the rest of the dots on the right. It is much less awkward and produces more uniform results, especially when you are first learning to make consistent dots. Encasing is a breeze when you can flip the mandrel as you work.

One of the biggest benefits is that, by using both hands to hold the mandrel, you eliminate some of the stress on your shoulders and back. The bead is level as you rotate it because you are using both hands to hold the mandrel. I use a Creation Station and rest my elbows on the pads as I rotate the bead.

The one big disadvantage is that there simply isn’t enough room on the ends of the mandrel for you to grip with your entire fist. You must hold the mandrel with your fingers rather than with your entire hand. This is difficult for some people who have been making beads a long time, but easy for beginners because they have not yet attained the “muscle memory” from years of experience.

Of course, you can always use a tool to hold the end of your mandrel if you still want to work on the end, but that is just one more tool to pick up and put down when your hands are right there on the ends of your arms. For those of you who work on the end of the mandrel, changing now may be awkward for you at first, but I suggest that you try it and see which method you prefer. You may find that a simple change like this is exactly what you needed to get past your hurdles. Torch on!
There is a little story behind my seahorse design. I had been using some tight, twisted canes to make what I call Dragon Beads. These are long, thin beads with a twisted cane applied in a random design, then heated until the twisted cane spreads out and makes a reticulated design that is suggestive of ammonites, marine worms, or fossils. The patterns that the twisted canes made kept suggesting something else to me, but I just could not figure out what that “something else” was. It really drove me nuts for a long time, but I kept on making Dragon Beads, and I still make them.

A few years ago my parents decided to move into a smaller place and they sent me all the things I had left at home. In one of the boxes they sent, I found a small plastic vial I had purchased in Mexico when I was about 6 years old. It was a souvenir from a long ago visit to a fishing village with my dad.

Inside the vial were several items floating in glycerin. There were some tiny seashells, some pebbles, a tiny starfish and a small, dried seahorse. He had been in there for so long that he was almost transparent. His exoskeleton was very visible—skeletal and wonderful. As soon as I saw the little seahorse I knew this was the design that was trying to speak to me.

I then began trying to make seahorses. The first ones were flat, made with one of Corina’s Crunch presses. They looked like they came up from very deep water much too fast.

Next, I started putting them on bicones. This worked pretty well, and I thought it was fun to have to turn the bead to see the entire design. Kathy Johnson, whose name is synonymous with fabulous horse beads, told me, “I want to see the whole seahorse all at once!” I went back to flat, pressed beads and tried again. The first ones were okay but not the greatest.

After a lot of trial and error and a ton of practice, I came up with the basic design that I use now (turquoise background, photo above right).
The design has increased in size over time, and I have added a lot of curls and texture to the beads, but the basic seahorse design is still the same. I make them with raked, twisted canes with a large, flat bead for a canvas, although I sometimes make the seahorse on a bicone for people that want one made that way. To make the flat beads, I have used crunch presses, a BBQ masher, and most frequently now, Jim Moore’s Cushion Tool. This tool allows me to make a really large bead, press it into a random shape that has lots of room for painting the seahorse on and lends itself to cutting and twisting the big “waves” into the bead.

The seahorse bead had such simple beginnings—just a piece of twisted cane and a flat surface, but over time it has evolved into a complex bead with texture and weight. I hope the following photos of seahorses show some of that evolution and inspire you in your glass work!

To view more of Kimberly’s work you can visit her website at: http://www.kimberlyaffleck.com or her Etsy store at http://www.kimberlyaffleck.etsy.com

To see a short tutorial on how Kimberly makes the twisties she uses to create her seahorses, here is a link to a thread from Lampwork Etc. from 2005. All these years later, it is still timely. http://www.lampworketc.com/forums/showthread.php?t=3450
This month’s theme, Small Beads – Big Impact, was a good reminder for me of just how much I love making little beads. After all, the main reason I wanted to learn lampworking was so I could make glass beads to use in my jewelry designs.

One of the first specialty tools I bought is still a favorite and that’s the Cattwalk Dual Crunch press (photo below). Crunch tabs are super slim and make great bracelet beads that lay against the skin very comfortably without adding a lot of weight or bulk to the piece.

The reason I love my dual crunch so much is that it gives me the versatility to make tiny beads in the 13-15mm range for bracelets and earrings, and the same press also contains the standard crunch size if I want to make matching beads in slightly larger sizes for necklaces.

Another bonus is that the bottom plate of the press flips over and offers a flat-tile bottom if you would rather have the underside of your beads flat instead of curved. (http://www.cattwalk.com/crunches.htm)

If you prefer graphite shaping/forming tools to brass presses, CGBeads has one that really fits the bill.

The Mini Spacers beadroller enables you to make two different sizes in each of five shapes including ovals, barrels, discs, rounds, and donuts. Sizes run from a 2.5 x 8mm disc up to the 8 x 11.5mm barrel. This assortment, all-in-one roller allows you make everything from consistently sized, one-color spacer beads to tiny little decorative barrels. That’s a lot of options from one tool! (http://www.cgbeads.com/beads mixed.html)

Another item I find indispensable for making small beads is my bent tungsten tweezers. These are a bit pricey at $61, but worth every penny. Two pieces of 2.5mm bent tungsten rods are ground to sharp points and mounted on tweezer handles. Since the ends are tungsten, they don’t stick to your bead. This makes picking that errant piece of frit from the edge of the mandrel a breeze. (photo below)

They are also amazing for nudging raised stringer work, especially straight line stringers, into place without running the risk of getting the tweezers too hot so that they stick to either the stringer or the surface below.
The sharp points and bent angles also mean you can use them for poking into very precise areas on your canvas. These can be purchased from Malcolm at Artco, and I think they will become a favorite of yours, too. ([http://www.artcoinc.com/tweezers.php](http://www.artcoinc.com/tweezers.php))

So now we’ve made some pretty little beads, and it’s time to turn them into a spectacular piece of jewelry. Unfortunately, the holes of our lampwork beads are often much larger than our chosen stringing material and the other components in our design, especially if they are made on mandrels larger than a 1/16 size.

There is nothing more frustrating than designing a beautiful piece of jewelry and having your lampwork beads spin around because of that large hole. TierraCast has solved that problem. Their bead aligners are a combination bead cap or spacer bead with a little tube built right on the end of it that slides down in the bead hole, reducing the hole diameter to a size more closely matched to your other components. (photo below)

The aligners come in several different styles, finishes, and sizes, and with the TierraCast name behind them, you know in advance how wonderful the quality is.

I have to give Diane Woodall credit for turning me on to these wonderful little creations, and since I first tried them, I’ve already ordered another batch!

Diane first told us about them in her tutorial “Dramatic Donut Drops” in the December 2011 issue of the Soda Lime Times, but they are worth mentioning again because they are the answer to a prayer if you make jewelry with lampwork beads (with 3/32” holes).

Several retailers carry the bead aligners, but I found the most competitive prices to be at Art Beads. Below is a pendant made by Verna Hedgecoth that illustrates how sleek the aligners look when paired with lampwork beads.

([http://beads.artbeads.com/search?w=terra+cast+bead+aligners](http://beads.artbeads.com/search?w=terra+cast+bead+aligners))

If you decide to give any of these products a try, I’d love to hear how you like them! Or if you’ve found some new tool, glass, jewelry component, etc. that you’d like to share with the world, drop me a line at beadaddicts@frontiernet.net. I’m always on the lookout for new products to feature here in the Grubby Mitts report, and who knows? You might already be using the next “hot item” that everyone wants to know about.

Coming next month... goodies to help you make gorgeous organic beads!

[Learn to Make Seashell Beads](http://www.dianewoodall.etsy.com) or [http://www.beckymason.etsy.com](http://www.beckymason.etsy.com)
Julie Fountain of Lush Lampwork chose the perfect name for her button tutorial. I had no idea how addicting and fun making buttons could be until working through her e-book. They are my new guilty pleasure! Though there really is no guilt involved, other than that it is so easy to make such fun creations.

The tutorial is 21 pages long and very well laid out. The photographs and instructions are clear and concise, showing you exactly how to get the results she describes. Julie gives directions for making two different types of buttons: shank style and the traditional 2-hole style. She walks you through step-by-step how to make specific buttons, but the possibilities are endless.

Julie's shank style button method is what makes this tutorial a must have (photo right). I believe it is easy enough for most novices. I just recommend being able to make round beads and having a fair knowledge of heat control. Her optional button tool, which she sells for just £8 ($13), is worth the small investment to make button creation a breeze.

For the two-hole buttons (photo left), I recommend an intermediate lampworking skill level. It utilizes a 2-prong mandrel, which I believe would be difficult for someone new to beadmaking to master. The method described in the tutorial, however, is clearly written and easy to understand. After a few "oopsie" buttons, I got the hang of it and enjoyed making the 2-hole version as well. Julie walks you through making a very playful flower button.

The e-book itself costs £12 (roughly $19), while the version including the button tool is £19.20, plus 50 p - £ 1.00 shipping (roughly $31). In my opinion, the tutorial plus the tool is an exceptional value, as there are other uses for the button tool other than just buttons. For the 2-hole buttons, you need a few 2-prong mandrels, which cost around $5 each depending on the vendor and sales. Other than the mandrels, button tool (which there are alternatives for, though admitted they do not work as well), it is recommended that you own glass shears and a stump shaper. As far as glass cost, nothing special and hard to get is required. I made my buttons with what I had on hand.
With the holidays approaching, you may enjoy an additional section on how to use your buttons, including great ideas for giving your buttons as gifts. I have already knocked my Christmas shopping list in half with the fun things I can make with my buttons. The tutorial itself would make a great gift for another lampworker. We do love to learn new things, and something as fun as button making is sure to please.

-Melt With Me Creations-
http://www.JenneRebecca.com

To purchase Julie’s tutorial: http://www.lushlampwork.etsy.com

www.flamekeeper.etsy.com
www.hannahrachel.etsy.com
www.corinabeads.com

http://www.fosterfire.etsy.com
The team of Lori Peterson and Kim Milan are the creative geniuses behind Lori and Kim, the much-loved online source for murrini. Lori is also known for her bright and whimsical beads, many of which contain her own murrini. In this tutorial, Lori shares the secrets to one of her most popular beads, the confetti bead. This is an intermediate tutorial and some experience making twisties is helpful.

Gather your supplies:

- White or light colored opaque glass
- At least 4 murrini - 4 will be used for the bead, but you should have extras on hand just in case you drop one (like I did) or one cracks in the flame.
- Tweezers to pick up the murrini.
- Frit blend of your choice
- A twistie – I used a base of clear with black and white stripes which I then encased in clear before I twisted (eliminating the need to encase the twistie once it’s on the bead).
- Clear (I use Aether by Double Helix)
- Stringers of Aether clear – 1.5mm - 2.5mm thick (purchased or hand pulled)
- Bead roller or marver (optional)

Pour the frit into a container and select at least four brightly colored murrini.

Here you see the clear, black and white twistie. Set it aside until you are ready to use it.
**Step 1** - Make a white base bead, not too big, but big enough to leave space between the 4 murrini you’ve chosen.

**Step 2** - Roll the white bead in frit. You don’t need much. Pick colors that will show up well against the base bead.

**Step 3** - Melt the frit in completely. I like to let it gravity swirl a bit so that the frit color spreads around and covers all the white. To gravity swirl, simply let the bead droop slightly while it’s in a molten state, stretching out the design in the frit before rounding it out again.

**Step 4** - Spot heat one side of the bead, near the mandrel. While doing this, preheat the murrini by holding it with tweezers in the back of the flame. Once the spot on the bead is hot, place the preheated murrini and set it in just a bit by pressing lightly with the flat side of your tweezers. Just a quick tap will do. Once it’s set, gently warm the murrini and take it out of the flame. Wait two seconds and GENTLY press it so that it squats down just a bit. This will make it easier to encase later.

**Step 5** - Spot heat on the opposite side of the bead, near the same mandrel hole and preheat the murrini as in Step 4. When the spot is hot, set the murrini just like before with a quick tap. Again, gently warm the murrini and wait while it sets up and then gently press it until it is about the same height as the other murrini.
Step 6 - Heat a spot in between the other two murrini, this time on the other end near the mandrel and preheat the murrini while you’re heating up the spot. Set it as you did in Step 4.

Step 7 – Repeat Step 4 with the last murrini, placing it opposite the one you just set. You will now have 4 murrini set equally around the bead with some spaces left between them. We’re about to do something about that.

Step 8 - Ok, I’m going to use a very technical term here, so brace yourself. Take the twistie and meander it around the bead, putting it in the places where the murrini is not. Yes, meander. It helps if you sing “la la la la la” to yourself while you are meandering. Meandering is like zigzagging, but much gentler.

Step 9 - Put a nice sized dot of clear on the top of each murrini. Don’t melt it in.

Step 10 - With thick, clear stringer, fill in the gaps between the twistie and murrini, making sure you have covered the entire base bead with clear. It will look a right lumpy mess at this point. Heat up the whole bead to a nice glow.
Step 11 – Now it’s time to shape the bead into a beautiful sphere. This is done in a series of steps. I’m using a CG Beadroller (see link at the end of this tutorial), but you can also shape by hand or with another kind of marver. Tap the bead very gently into one of the large cavities of your bead-roller, aiming for each murrini. These gentle taps help the murrini spread out and look pretty without getting distorted to the side.

Step 12 - Heat the bead again. It should be considerably smoother and less lumpy at this point. Gently tap it another 4 times in the next smaller cavity of the bead roller. Don’t roll yet. Just gently widen the bead. At this point you can start checking for symmetry. If you have one side or area that is not full enough, you can add some clear.

Step 13 - Heat the bead up again and check it for lopsidedness. If it is pretty symmetrical, go ahead and gently place it in the next smaller cavity of the bead roller and start to roll it very gently. If it is very unsymmetrical, you can add more clear glass to the side that needs it and heat it up before rolling.

Step 14 - Heat it again and do your final rolling and shaping in the cavity where your bead fits. For this bead, it was the cavity shown in the picture. Most of my beads end up fitting in the 1st or 2nd cavities of the large round bead roller from CGbeadrollers.

Step 15 – When you’re happy with the shaping, pop it into the kiln!

Lori and Kim’s murrini can be purchased from their website at www.loriandkim.com or from their Etsy store at www.loriandkim.etsy.com.
A few years ago I was looking for a new style of beads I could make using the extensive collection of cased stringers, twisties and complex latticinos I’d accumulated over the years. As I laid out a color combination that I liked, I was reminded of childhood paint by numbers projects. I wanted the beads to have a hand-painted look with designs that weren’t perfect, as if a child had painted them, and thus my Paint By Numbers series was born.

The beads are all made basically the same way by applying designs – twisties, dots, stripes and lines – in parallel bands around a base bead. The bands can be melted in and shaped smoothly, or left slightly raised for texture, as in this tutorial.

Note: These beads may be made on a single base color (as in this tutorial), or over stripes in various colors. If you want a multi-colored base, the easiest way is to lay down a very thin barrel of one color then add bands of other colors on top of the base bead, melting them in before adding your bands of twisties, dots and stripes.

This bead is intended to be a long tapered tube, but occasionally the bead will get too broad. Don’t despair. Just mash it into a nice tab using your parallel mashers or marver. At the end of this tutorial you’ll see an example of a bead that I flattened when it got too fat. The design lends itself nicely to the tab shape.

**Tools:**
- Marver(s)
- Knife or shaping tool

**Materials:**
- Assortment of stringers and twisties
- Rods in your choice of colors

In order to make this bead successfully you should be able to pull stringers and make encased stringers and twisties. You should have some marvering skills, although this bead provides a wonderful opportunity to practice marvering. This is an intermediate level tutorial.

**Step 1** – Gather an assortment of stringers and twisties in the color combination of your choice. For this bead I used what I had in my studio (in shades of blue and green).

**Step 2** – Begin the bead by winding on a long, thin base bead. Don’t make it too fat because you’ll be adding more glass. For this bead I used Effetre light sky blue.
Step 3 – To begin the stripes, wind on a stripe of glass to one end and marver it so that you create a small pucker. I used a cased stringer for the first stripe. I use a Val Cox tabletop marver for almost all of my marvering. I like it because it’s brass and can be coated with Beeswax, allowing the bead to move freely.

TIP: As you are making this bead it is very important to flash it in the flame often to keep it warm from end to end. Because it is thin, it doesn’t hold heat well and can crack if it gets too cool. Just make sure that as you are flashing it to keep it warm, you don’t give it so much heat that you lose the puckered end you worked so hard to create.

Step 4 – Apply a second stripe. For this stripe I used a multi-color twistie.

Step 5 – Give it some heat and use the flat edge of a knife or shaping tool to flatten the twistie slightly. Since I wanted the designs to be somewhat raised, I applied just enough heat to soften the twistie, but not enough to melt it flat.

TIP: I like to use a brass knife for shaping. These little knives are sometimes difficult to find, but there are some tips on where to get them in the August, 2011 Soda Lime Times in the Grubby Mitts Report.

Step 6 – Using a cased stringer, apply a wavy pattern and leave it slightly raised. This appears red in the photo because the stringer was pea green cased in grass green and it looks red when molten.

Step 7 – Apply the fourth stripe using a twistie. Remember to keep flashing that bead!

TIP: Although I’m showing you one method for making this bead, you can use your imagination and make the stripes any way that suits you. There is no right or wrong way to make this bead.
Step 8 – As before, flatten the stripe slightly with the flat edge of a knife or shaping tool. You can also leave it more raised as long as you ensure that it is well adhered.

Step 9 – Add a series of offset dots and melt them flat.

Step 10 – Add another stripe using a twistie. You will notice how I like to alternate the design elements so that twisties or cased stringers that are similar in color are not adjacent to each other. This keeps the design interesting and allows each stripe to be clearly visible.

Step 11 – Although it is hard to see in the photo, this stripe was made using a series of diagonal lines in pea green cased stringer. I melted in the lines and then put a small raised dot of cased stringer in aqua and white at the top of each line.

Step 12 – The last two rows of stripes were made with contrasting twisties. After applying the last stripe, marver the end and create a pucker.

Step 13 – As the last step before annealing, add transparent dots over the melted in dots – admire it for a few seconds and it’s finished!
Here are some photos of other Paint by Number beads I have made. You can see that the possibilities are endless, both in the colors you choose and in the final shape of the bead. The bead in the top left photo is a tab.

To see more of Becky’s work, you can visit her Etsy store:

http://www.beckymason.etsy.com
You may have seen lampwork artists creating changeable ring tops lately and wondered, “What's that all about and how can I make them?” Changeable ring tops are becoming increasingly popular among lampworkers here in the US, and no wonder! Originally developed in Europe, this unique new system of tools and changeable jewelry has become a fun (and addictive) way to change your jewelry designs with ease by using a compatible threaded nut and screw system. All you need is a mandrel set, some nuts to embed into the glass, and a changeable jewelry piece. Once you have the needed components, you can make as many tops as you like to change out with your jewelry. The sky is the limit to what you can make, and it's all up to your imagination!

Working with the changeable jewelry tools is easy. In this tutorial, I'll teach you how to prepare the mandrel and make these fast, classy, and elegant Tapestry Tops.

Tools and Materials:

For this tutorial, I used 104 COE glass. I used Effetre Black for the base color, various colors of murrini chips for the decorative elements, and two shades of green stringer for the leaf and dot details.

Tools you will need include a graphite (or your favorite) marver, tweezers to apply the murrini, and a straight razor-edged tool to create the simple leaves. You will also need a changeable ring top mandrel* and disk base, and of course, a changeable ring shank (or a changeable pendant back on which to wear your creations).

* The mandrels I use are compatible specifically with commercially made jewelry from Rico Design’s “Sunset Boulevard” line, as well as Silberwerk’s “RingDing” line.
Preparing the mandrels:

**Steps 1 and 2** - Screw the disk base onto the mandrel, and tighten it snugly. Dip the base and threaded shaft completely and evenly with bead release. Tap off any excess release, and set aside to dry, or use a hair dryer to speed drying. (There is no photo for this step, but you get the idea.)

Screw a hex nut in the height of your choice onto the threaded shaft (I used the 4mm height). Quick tip: it is helpful to remove a little bit of the bead release from the first few threads to help seat the nut correctly. Do not over tighten, but finger tighten so the nut is snug against the disk base. Make sure the hex shaped lip is facing up.

Place a small dab of bead release on the very top of the nut inside the hole of the nut to ensure glass doesn’t stick to the tip of the mandrel. It is important to leave the rest of the nut uncoated and free of any bead release, as the nut will become embedded into the glass. Any bead release on the nut itself will prevent the glass from sticking to it.

Creating the cabochon:

**Step 3** - Start by heating a gather on a glass rod to about the size of a small grape. For the Tapestry Tops, I chose Effetre Black for the base, but you can choose any color you wish. Preheat the nut on the mandrel so the gather will stick to it. Touch the gather to the nut. I like to wind the gather around the top of the nut in a clockwise manner to get a good sized blob to form on top of the nut.

Once you have the initial blob, keep adding glass to the blob to form the cabochon. Quick tip: to keep the cabochon centered on the nut, gather enough glass on the nut and deeply heat to an orange glow so that the glass begins to flow. Stand the mandrel straight up vertically and let gravity slump the mass of glass down evenly to touch the disk base. With this tip, it should be easy to center every time!

**Step 4** - To spread the cabochon out over the base, heat the centered blob to a dull orange glow and gently press down with a marver.
Step 5 - Continue adding more glass, pressing and spreading out the glass until it is the diameter and thickness that you desire. Here, the cabochon is about an inch in diameter, and roughly 7mm thick at the center. I tapered down the edges to about 4mm thick so the top has a nice, domed shape. Once you have the cabochon the shape you want, it's time to embellish!

Embellishing the cabochon:

Step 6 - Start by spot heating an area on the cab while preheating the murrini high in the flame. Touch the murrini to the heated area.

Step 7 - Use a little heat to warm up just the top of the murrini to a dull red/orange and press with a marver. Take this step slow to avoid smearing the murrini.

Step 8 - Continue heating and pressing the murrini until it is flush to the cab, or to the desired height if you want to leave it slightly raised. Continue adding as many murrini as you wish. Try overlapping murrini for a more random effect!

Steps 9 and 10 - Once the murrini are melted to the desired height, it's time to adorn them with dots and leaves. You can either add the dots or the leaves first, but I generally choose to add leaves first and then the dots afterward. If some of the leaves lose their shape after applying the dots (due to spot heating the dots), you can always go back in and touch them up. The sequence is up to you.

With a light green stringer, apply dots next to the murrini. I like to apply all of the leaf dots at once, and I leave each one raised at this point. The leaf-making step is random and you can really use your artistic license to have as many or as few leaves as you like. Don't be afraid to try layering the little leaves on top of the murrini too!
Step 11 - Once the leaves are placed, gently heat each one and tap them down to spread them out just a little, but don’t melt them down all the way (I use the flat part of a razor, but you can use any small sized marver). Spot heat each leaf dot so it rounds up just a bit and quickly press the razor tool edge in the center of the dot and pull downward to create a point.

Step 12 - Continue with each dot until all the leaves are complete. If you are happy with just the leaves, you can pop the whole mandrel into the kiln and anneal the ring topper using your regular annealing schedule.

Step 13 – Another option is to add some accent dots in another color as I did. Now, just anneal and count the hours until you can open the kiln and take a peek.

Once the ring topper is annealed and cooled, unscrew the cabochon from the mandrel and base, clean off any bead release residue under warm water, then screw the top onto your ring base or pendant back. You are all done! The next step is to admire your work and enjoy your new creation.

Sources:

Tools and changeable jewelry:

In the U.S. - JetAge Studio at [http://www.jetagestudio.com](http://www.jetagestudio.com)


Both companies use compatible tools that work with commercially made rings from Rico Design’s Sunset Boulevard changeable jewelry system, as well as Silberwerk’s RingDing sterling silver jewelry.

Murrini and other lampworking specialty items are also available at JetAge Studio.

Author Renee Wiggins, has been working with glass for more than 20 years, and currently owns JetAge Studio, an online shop specializing in custom lampworking supplies. When she is not busy running the store or making custom murrini, she works in her glass studio creating one-of-a-kind focal beads and jewelry. Her current passion is creating colorful disk beads and organic hollow beads. She loves working with the entire plethora of silver glass palette available and, of course, making decorative changeable ring and pendant tops!

Renee’s personal work can be viewed on her website: [www.ReneeWigginsDesign.com](http://www.ReneeWigginsDesign.com)
And now...here are a few more ring toppers made by some talented flameworkers. I thought you might enjoy some eye candy!

Photos 1 and 2 - Gorgeous ring tops by Bobbie Pene of New Zealand. [www.bobbiepene.co.nz](http://www.bobbiepene.co.nz)

Photos 3 and 4 - Hailing from Switzerland, Martina Marugg-Zinn has been making changeable tops for many years and has explored many techniques for her tops. It is a little known fact that she was the original catalyst for my obsession making my own tops! [http://www.martinabead.com/](http://www.martinabead.com/)

Photo 5 - Deb Byrne is an Australian artist and owner of DeBeads where she sells unique lampwork supplies as well as her beautiful original creations. [http://www.debeads.com.au](http://www.debeads.com.au)

Photos 6 and 7 - Louise Little is a glass bead artist and jewelry designer from Tucson, Arizona. Her desert inspired beads and jewelry have won numerous international awards. [www.louiselittle.com](http://www.louiselittle.com) and [www.louiselittle.etsy.com](http://www.louiselittle.etsy.com)

Photo 8 - Gail Joseph is from Tyngsboro, Massachusetts and is the owner of GGGlass where she sells her own hand-blended frit colors in 90, 96, and 104 COE, as well as her own original handmade “veiled” and “duo” cane for lampworkers, available in 96 COE. [http://www.ggglass.com/](http://www.ggglass.com/)
I have enjoyed making owl beads for the kiddos in Beads of Courage for some time, and this new, simplified design will make it possible to make even more owls without sacrificing style or creativity. These versatile little owls will delight the kids and are quick and easy because you can make them in one piece.

You can see from the photo above that there are limitless variations on the basic design (without wings, wings made by simply rolling the edges of the bead in frit, horned or no horns, or even with tail feathers). Each owl you make will have its own personality and you can let your imagination run wild as you create a flock of these fanciful birds. Depending on how you shape the head and eyebrows, your owl can look wise, cute or goofy.

You don’t need any special tools, (aside from a marver) to make this bead, however I have an oval CG beadroller that does make creating the initial oval bead easier. I am a big believer in using tools to aid in the creation of my beads, but you can certainly shape the base bead without a beadroller with equally good results.

**You will need:**
- Rod of Effetre light ivory or white
- Fat stringer of Effetre dark yellow opaque
- Rod of silver glass for the eyes (I used striking color)
- Torch marver or hand-held marver
- Razor tool and poker
- Shaping tool of your choice
- Oval CG beadroller (BR901) optional

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**Owls above, left to right:**
- Base of Cim Peace, wrapped in complex cane of assorted browns, striking color eyes.
- Base of Double Helix Triton, cased in clear, Striking Color eyes.
- Base of Effetre ivory, Striking Color eyes and spots
- Base of Cim Peace rolled in Glass Diversions Coffee Bean frit, Striking Color eyes.
- Base of Cim Peace, pressed and then edges dipped in Glass Diversions Coffee Bean frit, Striking Color eyes.
- Base of Effetre light ivory, Precision Chagall Dk Silver Blue eyes.
Step 1 - Lay the mandrel into the beadroller and mark the edges of the opening with a Sharpie. As long as you keep the glass inside these marks, the footprint will not be too wide for the mold.

Step 2 - Begin by winding on a footprint narrower than the opening in the beadroller. If you aren’t using a beadroller, wind on a footprint about one-inch long.

Step 3 - Continue adding glass, checking the shape in the beadroller to see where you need to add more glass. Here, I need to add some glass to the ends to get rid of those points.

Step 4 – Begin shaping by gently tapping the bead in the beadroller until the shape is established, and then heat the bead and roll it gently in the beadroller until the oval is the right shape.

Step 5 – Now it is time to press the bead into a tab. You can use parallel mashers, but I think you will have more control if you use a marver. Heat the bead until it is malleable and then press onto the marver, flipping the bead from side to side until you have an oval shaped tabular bead.

Steps 6, 7, and 8 – To create the wings you can always add glass to each side of the bead, but this method is quicker and easier and the bead is more structurally sound. To make the wings, apply heat along one edge and then swing the mandrel back and forth to help elongate the glass. Continue to heat that spot and swing the bead until the glass has elongated into a bump.
Step 9 - Apply some heat to the bump and then smooth it down from the top using a shaping tool, creating a little wing.

Steps 10, 11, and 12 - Repeat on the other side. At this point, the bead looks like a ghost, doesn’t it? (Just add a couple of eyes and I think you would have a great looking Halloween ghost). Do not do anything more to the wings yet. That will be the last step.

NOTE: Because I make beads in the middle of the mandrel, I may flip the mandrel from time to time during the process of making this bead. If you make beads on the end of a mandrel, you will need to adapt my instructions accordingly.

Steps 13 and 14 - Mark the location of the eyes by using a pair of tweezers to make indentations in the glass.

Step 15 - Using silver glass (I prefer striking silver glass for the eyes instead of reducing colors because I don’t want the ivory to discolor), apply two small dots of glass for the eyes. Keep the dots small. Striking Color makes wonderful eyes because it is so concentrated, but any striking silver glass will work. If you do not have silver glass to use for the eyes, you can make them from any transparent color. Aqua, intense blue, medium amber and teal all work very well.

Step 16 - Melt the dots slightly and then poke the middle of each dot with a poking tool to create the pupils.
Steps 17 and 18 - Add a drop of clear to each eye and melt slightly. Do not melt them all the way in, but leave them rounded.

TIP: If you do not have any striking silver glass for the eyes, Effetre light aquamarine makes beautiful eyes on an ivory background. The transparent aqua reacts with the ivory and turns a lovely green color.

Step 19 - To decorate the belly of the owl I like to add tiny dots in a circular pattern. For this owl, I used Striking Color, but you can use any color that appeals to you. Since owls do not actually have polka dot bellies, it’s not like there are any hard and fast rules here. Melt the dots in. You could even get creative and add a stringer swirl on his tummy.

Step 20 - To add the beak melt a small gather on the end of the stringer, touch the spot between the eyes and then swipe downward, creating a point. If necessary, you can use a razor tool to define the point of the beak.

Steps 21, 22, and 23 - To form the feet, add two large dots of dark yellow at the base of the owl, melt slightly and then press twice with a razor tool to create three toes. Our bead is finally starting to look a little like an owl.

Step 24 - If you want to make a horned owl, now is the time to add the horns. To do this, apply heat to the top of the owl and use tweezers to squeeze and pull up one horn.
Step 25 – Repeat on the other side, adjusting the horns to make them even. You can leave the owl as is or add additional decoration to this area.

Step 26 - I like the look of a little extra detail, so I’m adding a line of raised stinger from between each eye to the top upper edge of each horn. Use a razor tool to push the stringer down between the eyes.

Step 27 - Now it is time to add some detail to the wings. One at a time, heat each wing and holding it flat on a marver, press a razor tool into it, making three or four angled lines. Voila!

Step 28 – Here is our little owl after adding some nostrils with a poker and annealing. Whether you are young or old, who wouldn’t want to give this cutie a good home?

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A Message from Robert Simmons with Beads of Courage

~Donation Guidelines~

When you make beads for us please be sure to have nice ‘puckers’ on the ends of the beads. Sharp edges on the bead holes can cut fingers so beads with sharp edges can’t be sent out. Overly frilly bits sticking out might break off and leave sharp edges on the surface so please be sure that raised dots have solid connections (no undercuts) and that surface decorations are robust enough to take some knocking about.

We also ask that you refrain from using reduction frit or glasses that give a metallic sheen on the surface due to heavy metal issues with these materials. We can’t send metallic reduction surface beads out to the kids.

Anneal your beads properly in a kiln to be sure that they don’t crack. Cracked beads have to go into the trash.

Before you ship please make sure that the bead release is cleaned out. Beads with the release still inside take more time for our limited staff to clean and this seriously slows down our turnaround time.

When you send your beads please include a brief inventory in the package along with your contact information. We want to send you a Thank You certificate and a receipt for your donation. If you send beads from multiple donors in one box just include the same information for everyone so that they can all be recognized. A bead donation form can be downloaded from this page: http://www.beadsofcourage.org/pages/beadartists.htm
Cool Stuff for Hot Glass

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# Lampwork Bead Artists

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- **Dolly Aholes**  

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  [http://www.samanthabeads.etsy.com](http://www.samanthabeads.etsy.com)

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  [www.etsy.com/glassbead](http://www.etsy.com/glassbead)

- **Michou Anderson**  
  [http://michoudesign.blogspot.com/](http://michoudesign.blogspot.com/)

- **Michael Barley**  

- **Jeannie Barnard**  
  [http://nimbussglasscreations.etsy.com](http://nimbussglasscreations.etsy.com)

- **Lynn Bauter**  
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- **Pam Brisse**  
  [http://bluebetween.blogspot.com/](http://bluebetween.blogspot.com/)

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