

## Workshop review

## Fun with metal clay



Sian Hamilton attends a spinner ring workshop with metal clay guru Hattie Sanderson, hosted by Tracey Spurgin at the Craftworx studio set in the beautiful East Yorkshire countryside

I have a love of Metal Clay, I believe it is one of the greatest products that has been introduced to the jewellery making community for a long time. It allows novices the ability to work in silver without the need for extensive silversmithing skills or the need for a lot of equipment. So I was very excited when Tracey Spurgin invited me to attend a workshop at her Craftworx studio in East Yorkshire with the metal clay guru Hattie Sanderson.

## Meeting the lovely Hattie

Hattie is from the USA where metal clay has been widely available for over ten years, the premier metal clay artists are mostly from America and I was quite excited to meet Hattie in person. She is not only an outstanding metal clay artist but as it turns out is a very nice person as well! The course I attended was spinner rings. Hattie has designed a ring that has components which are free moving, that sit on the top of the band attached by a screw thread and nut that is embedded into the band.

## Introducing HattieS Patties

The day started with an introduction from Hattie and a little about her back ground, which alone is very interesting as she is a metal clay 'entrepreneur' having developed a range of great products that enhance the metal

clay making experience. The most innovative is her HattieS Patties, these are ring sizing inserts that assure proper ring sizing as the metal clay shrinks during firing, so your ring always comes out of the kiln the size you want. The patties were born out of Hattie's frustration with rings shrinking to various sizes during firing based on the variables of ring thickness, width, inclusions etc. After the quick intro, Hattie sat us down to the first demonstration of how to make the ring shank with a tapered belly so they sit comfortably on the finger and then how to embed a miniature nut into the top of the band to take the thread and keep the beads in place.

## Getting stuck in

The explanation and demonstration were very straightforward and along with a comprehensive standout, we were all raring to have a go. The morning was spent making the ring shank with the nut embedded, creating nut covers and washers and making bolt heads. Hattie's way of making a ring shank is very easy and she has a special way of making the join strong and easy to clean up. Some of the components went into the kiln whilst we were at lunch. Following lunch Hattie did her second demonstration to complete all the instructions for the ring. During the afternoon the rings were fired with the HattieS Patties in place. By the end of the day we all had a spinner ring finished with our own components.

The day went very quickly and Hattie was on hand to help out whenever needed. Tracey was an excellent host and her Craftworx studio is very well equipped with a range of products available to buy on the day if you run out. Tracey runs a comprehensive range of workshops through the year, to find out more visit her website.

## CONTACT DETAILS

Tracey Spurgin, Craftworx - [www.craftworx.co.uk](http://www.craftworx.co.uk)  
Hattie Sanderson - [www.hattiesanderson.com](http://www.hattiesanderson.com)



More Spinner rings



Hattie demonstrating



Hattie's Spinner ring



Hard at work!