

The Newest Art Form...

Doll 'Rebirthing',

Terry Quinn makes it 'real'!

Rebirthing is a very specific NEW art form, where modern soft-vinyl or silicone dolls are made to appear like real babies . . . and no one else does it better than artist and sculptor Terry Quinn. You'll have to agree that Terry has taken the art of doll 'rebirthing' to a higher plane.

A 'reborn' doll is one that has been completely disassembled, colored inside for tinting, weighted, stuffed, reassembled with vinyl or cloth body, and finished with skin blush, hair, and clothing. In this project sheet Terry Quinn herself reveals some of her secrets to high realism by demonstrating how she creates such realistic facial and skin coloring on a silicone molded doll head.

Most artists who practice doll rebirthing strive for realism. Terry shows you how to begin in 6-easy-to-follow steps.

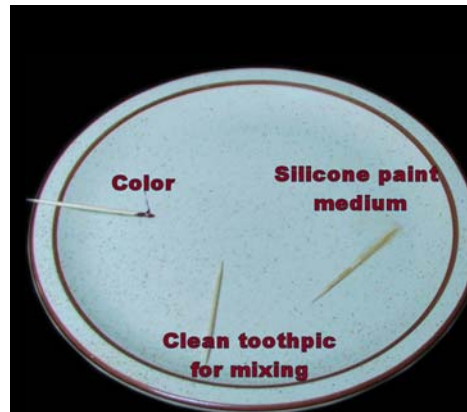


Artist Terry Quinn holding Lil' Bit her original reborn silicone 'baby.'



Step 1

Lay out all your materials in advance as in the above photograph. The materials that are needed include, ArtMolds' Cirius™ brand, Quinn Blush paint and ArtMolds Cirius brand, Silicone Paint Medium, acetone or nail polish remover with acetone, make up sponges, tooth picks, a fine sanding sponge block, rubber gloves and a disposable plastic plate, or paper plate (Styrofoam will melt). Mix your paint on plastic or paper plates as these paints will adhere to most surfaces when dry.



Step 2

Cirius' Quinn Blush is a paint shade formulated by ArtMolds. It is the perfect shade for applying to the skin of silicone dolls, for the highest realism possible. No paint will stick to silicone, except paint with a silicone base such as the line of Cirius brand paints from ArtMolds. Cirius paints are actually two parts, the color dye itself – the color portion and the Silicone Medium- the curing portion. The color must be mixed with the Medium for the paint to set up and to adhere to the silicone surface.



Step 3

You want to practice with this medium before you begin, to insure that you have a feel for it. Silicone paint is not like any other painting medium on the market. Mix it up and just play with the paint right on the plate to get a feel for how fast it sets up, and how to apply it. It dries extremely quickly, so you must work with very small amounts at one time. One color is all you will have out on your plate at one time. You will get the hang of the mix-to-set time ratio with a little practice. So be a little patient with your self.



Step 4

The Paint Medium has a bit of an odor so work in a well ventilated area. Rubber gloves will protect your skin, a good practice when working with any chemicals.

Let's begin. Remove all doll parts from the clothed body. The silicone paint is not removable if it gets on the body. So you must take care to cover parts you don't want an accidental blotch. Use a cotton rag to clean each piece of your doll parts with the acetone or nail polish remover containing acetone. Clean it well and check for any hair or debris that might linger. Let the pieces air dry before applying the paint.



Step 5

Place the doll's head on a clean towel, but one that is for work use and not personal or bathing, use. Use a toothpick to pick up a very small amount of paint and set it on one side of the plate. Then place about a ¼ tsp of the Medium and put it on the other side of the plate. With your mixing toothpick handy – here you'll need to work fast. Add a dot of color to the side where the Medium is. If it is not dark enough after a quick mix, add more color from the toothpick that has color on it. Again, the emphasis is on fast mixing, as once the color is mixed with the medium it will begin to set up.



Step 6

As soon as the paint is mixed, begin to apply it to the doll. You will not be able to do the whole doll with this little mix. So concentrate on one small part at a time. Use the makeup sponge to apply the paint on the cheek. If you feel too much has been added, take a clean makeup sponge and remove some, simply by dabbing it off. Your paint will set quickly so you can't mess with it much further. If you make a mistake, you can take a rag with some acetone and wipe the paint off. If it is too cured, it won't wipe off. In that case you can use a very fine sanding block. The blotchy effect is achieved by adding paint and then removing it in places.

There are many other methods of painting of course. With practice, you will find more on your own. The technique here uses makeup sponges, but you can use other things, however using brushes for large areas can leave brush marks. So avoid them. You could use cotton cloth though. Cut up an old t-shirt. You can use an airbrush too if you are skilled in using one. Thin down the silicone paint with Xylene for best results.

Be creative and find out what works for you. Don't use cotton balls though, for they can leave little cotton hairs on the doll.

To paint inside the creases you may use the little tiny sponge that is on a stick. These are makeup applicators. Use the technique of applying and removing the excess at paint at the same time.

A method that works nicely, but takes patience, is to apply very thin layers to build on the colors. The only concern here is to not use too much paint at one time. If you build too much, you can get lumpy looking paint. Actually the real key is to use the most amount of color and the least amount of medium, to achieve the end result.

That is not to say, make the cheeks bright red. What is meant is make outer layer of the cheek lighter than the inner layer, then make that color and just do the outer layer, so that the inner layer does not have to lie on top of it. Airbrushing is the best method for building with the color. As you work, watch for hair and dust particles that land on your work. Use tiny tweezers to remove unwanted debris. Even dust particles will impair the look of the surface and take away that realism.

The most important thing about doing your painting is to act very quickly and if paint is left on the plate over a minute don't use it. This can cause what is known as a "cold gap". That is you have applied paint that has already begun to set up and now it will not cling to the face as well. You risk the paint not adhering to the surface

Repeat all of these steps as you do your baby, until she/he is done. Let it set up for a day and then put the baby back together. A little baby powder will take off any shine left from the paint and keep the baby from collecting dust. ■

Cirius Silicone paints are available at better art and craft stores. For your local dealer location visit www.artmolds.biz.

The baby used for Terry Quinn's painting demonstration is by Michelle Fagan.

More of artist Terry Quinn's work may be viewed at www.abcdollsc.com.