

AURA 22K Experiments and Trial results February - April 2018

The technique for adding Aura 22 to a piece is straightforward and the key to success is supposedly in the prep work and proper firing. I personally had mixed success with applying Aura 22K using the old tried and tested original methods and also a variety of new “fool proof” methods.

Frustration spurred me on to find a more reliable method. A thread I came across on a metal clay forum about PMC Gold Clay intrigued me. Unfortunately I cannot remember who posted the information but whoever it was had made a Gold paste out of PMC GOLD Clay, applied it to her fine silver clay pieces and was very happy with the results. Gold Clay is prohibitively expensive to work with but my interest was piqued by her suggestion that her Gold Paste method could possibly work successfully with Aura 22k or the Art Clay equivalent. I was keen to trial another method using Aura 22K. The most recommended method up to that point was to torch fire AURA 22K but in my own experience, even the torch firing method could still be hit or miss.

AURA 22K 2018

The following method worked very successfully for me on a variety of silver metal clay (PMC3, PMC+ and PMC Flex) pieces.

Method: Make an Aura paste (thin yogurt consistency) Apply a couple of Aura 22K coats to the dried and finished piece **before firing**. It is important to dry the Aura 22K completely in between coats. Fire piece at 850C-900C for the clay types recommended length of time. (It is possible to torch fire pieces **if** torch firing is recommended for your choice of silver clay) Remove piece from the kiln, **do not quench, brush or tumble the piece at this stage**. Allow piece to cool. Add 2 more coats of Aura 22K. Dry the Aura 22K completely in between coats and then torch fire. Maintain firing at a bright orange colour for approximately a minute. **While still hot, burnish with an Agate Burnisher** Quench the piece in water (**Only quench if there are no stones in the piece**), Brass brush burnish and finish as usual or tumble.

Results: Excellent gold colour and good adherence. The application of Aura 22K at the green ware stage, prior to firing plus the extra burnishing while hot appears to add additional insurance against chipping which has been an issue with other Aura 22K application methods. I recommend adding Aura 22K to highly textured areas. Texture definitely assists Aura 22K to adhere to the surface of fine silver clay.

Fine Silver Melting Temp 961C
22K Gold Melting Temperature 1060C

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