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Let's Play

The spirit of play is alive and well in the pages of this issue. And we're not talking about just any kind of play. Instead, we're focusing on the kind of play that bead-ers experience every time we pick up our tools and materials and begin to imagine the possibilities. One of my favorite authors, Diane Ackerman, wrote a book on the subject of "deep play," describing a kind of play that "has to do with an attitude or an extraordinarily intense state."

It's the kind of play that gives us bright, freeing moments, moments in which we are utterly attentive to our inspirations and able to stay in the "bead zone." At such times, we are completely nonplussed by the ordinary events of the world around us. The bills can molder on the desk, the car can wait to be washed, and we can definitely postpone anything less urgent than putting out a fire.

In such a state, what happens when we spill a mix of beads into our trays and begin to puzzle our next creation? We may get dreamy, wondering what the color red has to say to us—maybe it demands a bold treatment, or perhaps it would like to be an accent in a design full of subtler colors and elements. Or we may contemplate our favorite techniques, considering how we can use our newly perfected wireworking skills to fashion a necklace full of whimsical curlicues and wraps.

We are utterly absorbed when we play at this level. Sometimes we play in company by taking classes, attending bead retreats, or sharing a beading evening with friends. Not long ago, we had a beading day here at the magazine. We called it work. But let's be honest. It was play, pure and simple. With the doors of our conference room closed, we quickly spread our materials and tools out before us and began chattering. It wasn't long, though, before the talk fizzled and we were each orbiting our individual little planets, quietly absorbed in beading in a language all our own.

When you feast on the bright colors and whimsy of this issue's projects, we hope they trigger your own creativity and send you straight into deep play.

Happy beading!

What's Cookin' in the *Beadwork* Office?

- Can't wait for the next *Stringing* issue? It's coming soon! This special issue will be on sale at newsstands in October. Or, order it in advance at www.beadworkmagazine.com
- Special projects editor Jamie Hogsett is putting the finishing touches on a wireworking department that debuts in our next issue of *Beadwork*.
- Want to learn more about stringing, wire jewelry making, and more? Check out Interweave Press's six new beading titles at www.beadworkmagazine.com.

PHOTO BY TODD MAKASHIMA

