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Photo by CAROL CHEETHAM

DOYLE LANE DISPLAYS one of his handmade ceramic bead necklaces.

Fascination with making beads more than hobby for Doyle Lane

By Anne Sapio
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ALHAMBRA — Last Friday morning at Alhambra Public Library, Doyle Lane, bead maker, tried to set up his exhibition. "It took me by surprise," Lane humbly said, referring to the constant interruption from his ~~tooth~~ by onlookers who wanted to buy a bead or two or just admire the Lane-created necklaces.

Several hours later, the lobby showcase was transformed with a symmetrical line up of colorful, beaded necklaces. "I like a clinical display. Some say I should use textiles to show off my beaded ornaments, yet look at the color. Why would I muddle the effect with more color?" mused Lane, an El Sereno resident and longtime Alhambra library patron.

Low-heat firing, frequent glaze dipping and refiring — often three or four times — are the basics of Lane's process. "It depends on the results after each firing," said the New Orleans-bred artist. "I couldn't get the right translucence or opaqueness or color variation I like without my gas kiln."

After hearing Lane speak of color, one can see it is this aspect that appeals to the creator in him the most. His yellows, violets, reds and blues remind him of the ocean floor and coral reefs, he admitted. The earth colors mimic rocks or semiprecious stones. "The beauty of making ceramic beads is that each one is unique, there is always that excitement when I open the kiln after a firing," Lane said.

A Bead Society member, Lane attended its semiannual bead show in Culver City last weekend. "I'm not so good at groups," the artist said. "Before long, I have some idea that is opposite, and I sit there thinking — Why am I here and not working?" As far as Lane knows, he is the only Bead Society member who actual-

ly makes beads.

Libraries and research play heavily into Lane's work, past and present. An avid reader from an early age, he claims he was motivated to better himself. Art education in Los Angeles was his salvation 35 years ago. "It was my mother who singled me out (from his five siblings) to explore and achieve. I don't know why," Lane said, remembering his first violin concert at age seven. His mother died when Lane was 10.

Experimentation with materials and methods ever fascinate him, Lane revealed. Lane started his artistic career as a potter, moving to clay paintings and mosaics before choosing his current passion — ceramic beads. Lane describes his work, whatever it is, as grabbing his whole attention until he's satisfied with the final product. "I think I wouldn't be a good teacher, as I don't think there are that many who want the state of perfection I do. But then, I also say, 'Why do it if you don't do it to perfection?'" he said.

"If I started getting into selling and marketing myself, I'd cut down on the time I work," said the bead maker.

lobby of the Alhambra Public Library from Oct. 1-30. The library is closed Sunday and Monday and open Tuesday, noon-9; Wednesday and Thursday, 10 a.m.-9 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m.; and Saturday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. For more information, call the library at 410 W. Main St. in Alhambra at (618) 570-3000.