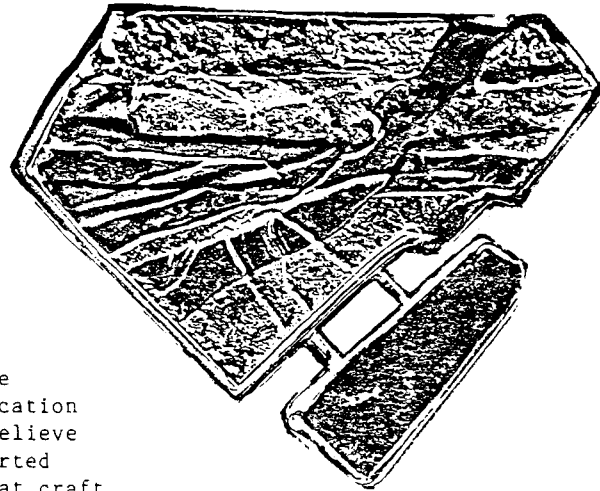




Enameller profile - Helen Fitzhardinge



Brooch

I stumbled into jewellery making by accident. In 1982, as I was finishing my Art Teachers Associateship I asked around to find out what was the easiest option to do in order to complete my qualification and someone said jewellery. I was silly enough to believe them. However, from day one I was hooked and so started a long and sometimes frustrating association with that craft.

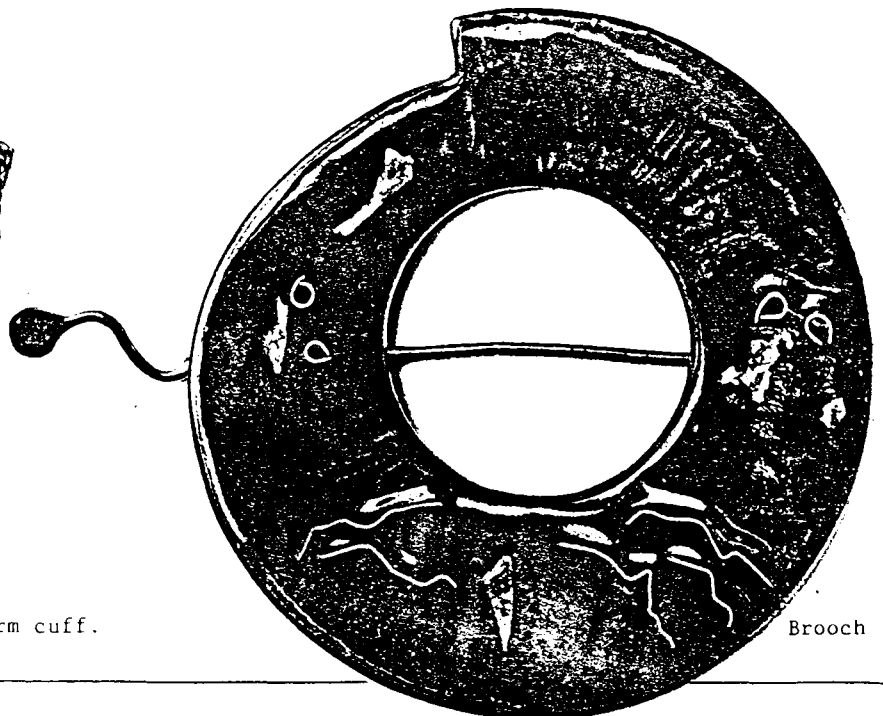
My family and I moved from Perth to the southern town of Albany in 1984. This area is one of nature's wonderlands - 'God's own country'. Within a 5 minute drive we have stretches of pristine white beaches, and clear blue water which are often surrounded by great slabs of granite rock. Just behind my home are areas of bush full of colour and texture. With such an imposing environment I find my work always refers to it - more often the abstract elements such as line and texture.

A few years ago I attended a workshop in enamelling at the Albany Summer School - again more by accident than design. Our tutor, Glenice Matthews was a brilliant teacher. She is such a knowledgeable expert that at the end of the week's course no-one had suffered any disasters. (For me those came later in my own workshop when taking too many shortcuts). Again I was hooked from day one. Enamelling gave me the means to introduce the one element that was missing from my work - colour.

Due to work commitments I have only produced a relatively small body of enamelled works. I tend to work in an almost painterly way with the enamels very wet, letting the colours bleed into one another. I gradually build up very thin layers of transparent enamel and I love the sensation of being able to peer through the layers to the textured metal beneath. Initially I made very simple pieces just revelling in and exploring the medium. My latest pieces combine large textured areas of a combination of metals with pieces of enamel set in bezels. I find the contrast between the roughness of the metal and the sheen and colour of the enamel works very well and I will be exploring this idea for quite some time.



Arm cuff.



Brooch

Opportunities to Exhibit National

December again?

Christmas in three weeks?

Didn't we just have that recently? A whole year gone by. But where did it go she sighs, wringing her hands.

This is the final issue before the Big Show - the National Exhibition in Sydney in January. I hope to get down to see it this year but it will depend on finances and Christmas sales. I hope that many of you will make it there to participate in this annual gathering of enamel enthusiasts. It's the only opportunity we have as a community to celebrate our medium and obsessions, and have a good natter about all things enamel.

The next issue if all goes well will include a reprinted, updated, bigger and better than ever, Supplies and Suppliers Listing. I will be contacting all businesses currently on the list for any changes to their information. If you know of any suppliers not on the list, that other enamellers would be interested to know of, please send details to AEN. There's going to be a lot of new listings this time and I'm beginning to wonder if it will all fit onto the usual folded A3 sheet.

Best wishes to everyone for a enjoyable and relaxing summer holiday season.


Editor

Thank you

Thankyou to these contributors to this issue:
Norma Alce, Helen Fitzhardinge, Jean Jenkins, Hiltrud Blaiich, Mary Raymond, Audrey Komrad, Edmund Masow, Philip Peters and all the enamellers who sent in information about themselves on the questionnaire.

News

The 4th National Juried Exhibition Of Enamels.
Convenor Mary Raymond reports that there will be 20 enamellers exhibiting this year. From the slides received it looks as though there will be some impressive works on show. 1994 must have been a busy year as many people did not get their slides in on time. This year then, there will be jurying from actual pieces sent by the December 7th deadline.

The exhibition opening will be from 6-8pm January 4th, (possibly by the Minister of the Arts Peter Collins, though this is yet to be confirmed).

Fireworks - 4th National Juried Exhibition of Enamels
January 4-15th 1995, 10am - 5pm daily.
Craftspace, 88 George Street, The Rocks, Sydney.

Members of the Enamellers Association will again be exhibiting their work at their annual Prouds Exhibition and Sale in Sydney. The show will be held from December 15 until Christmas Eve.

Cover

Helen Fitzhardinge can be contacted at 31 Bushby Road, Lower King 6330 WA.

Seventh Mornington Peninsular Craft Event

7th May - 4th June 1995

Non-acquisitive awards are made in the categories of Ceramics, Metalcraft, Jewellery, Glass, Fibre and Wood. Prize monies in excess of \$4000 total.

Artists wishing to be considered for invitation should submit three slides of recent work plus a brief resume. Work must have been completed in the past year.

Application fee is \$20.00, non refundable.

Closing date for applications is January 6th 1995.

Selected artists will be invited to enter up to two exhibits.

For entry forms, contact Lynne Heggie

ph 059 89 2661, fax 059762 170

or write to Mornington Peninsular Craft Event

PO Box 259, Red Hill South 3937.

Contemporary Wearables 95, Award Exhibition

24 September to 29 October 1995

A new format for the Award will be introduced this year.

It will be a pre-selected award exhibition with works selected by a five member jury panel, rather than an invitation award exhibition. The jurors who possess wide experience and expertise, will examine slides of actual pieces from which the exhibition will be selected.

The prizes for 1995 are \$3000.00 for first and \$1500 for second. Up to \$5000 will be allocated by the Gallery for acquisitions.

Entry forms and slides due by Friday 31 March 1995.

There is an entry fee of \$15.00, and two jewellery pieces or sets may be entered.

For entry details contact Diane Baker at the Toowoomba Regional Art Gallery

PO Box 2352, Toowoomba Qld 4350.

International

Invitation to participate in the exhibition 'Email International' in the Gallery Hock-Grasslin, Kunsthandel mbh, D85283 Wolnzach, Germany.

The Gallery Hock-Grasslin invites enamellers from all over the world to the above exhibition. Allowed are all kinds of enamel without factory-work.

The exhibition will take place from 23 June to the end of July 1995. This is nearly the same time-frame as the International Coburg Exhibition, so that foreign visitors can visit both exhibitions.

Please send up to 5 slides from different works by March 25 1995. The work will be selected by the gallery with technical assistance from Edmund Masow.

The work must be for sale. Shipping and transport costs to be paid by the artists. Send slides to: Gallery Hock-Grasslin

Am Marktplatz 9, D-85283 Wolnzach, Germany.

For sale - N.Z.

Enamelling kiln for sale. English, in good condition. 240V single phase. Thermostat control. 1300C maximum. Capacity - 150mm x 150mm deep.

Also a wide range of English and french enamels too numerous to list. Offers invited. New Zealand vendor. Telephone New Zealand 03 528 9410.

ENAMELLED BEADS

Distinctive and individual enamel beads can be made with simple tools and materials.

This is the method that I use.

1/ Cut $\frac{3}{16}$ th or $\frac{1}{4}$ inch diameter copper tubing into short lengths no longer than $\frac{3}{4}$ inch each. Tube cutters are available from hardware stores and cost around \$15.00. They seem to last forever.

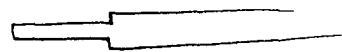
2/ A propane gas torch is satisfactory for bead making. I use a 'G' clamp with an additional piece welded to the top in the shape of a 'U' to hold the torch about four to six inches above the workbench.

3/ Place a small amount of flux and other colours of enamel, and some small lumps or enamel threads on a stainless steel sheet at individual spots, making sure the piles are easily accessible.

Trial and error is the only way to find out which colours work best, some don't work well with the naked flame and others are fine. I use only Thompson lead-bearing enamels and haven't experimented with their lead-free so don't know how well they work.

4/ The copper tubing lengths do not need any preparation as the heat of the torch will get rid of any dirt or grease on the surface.

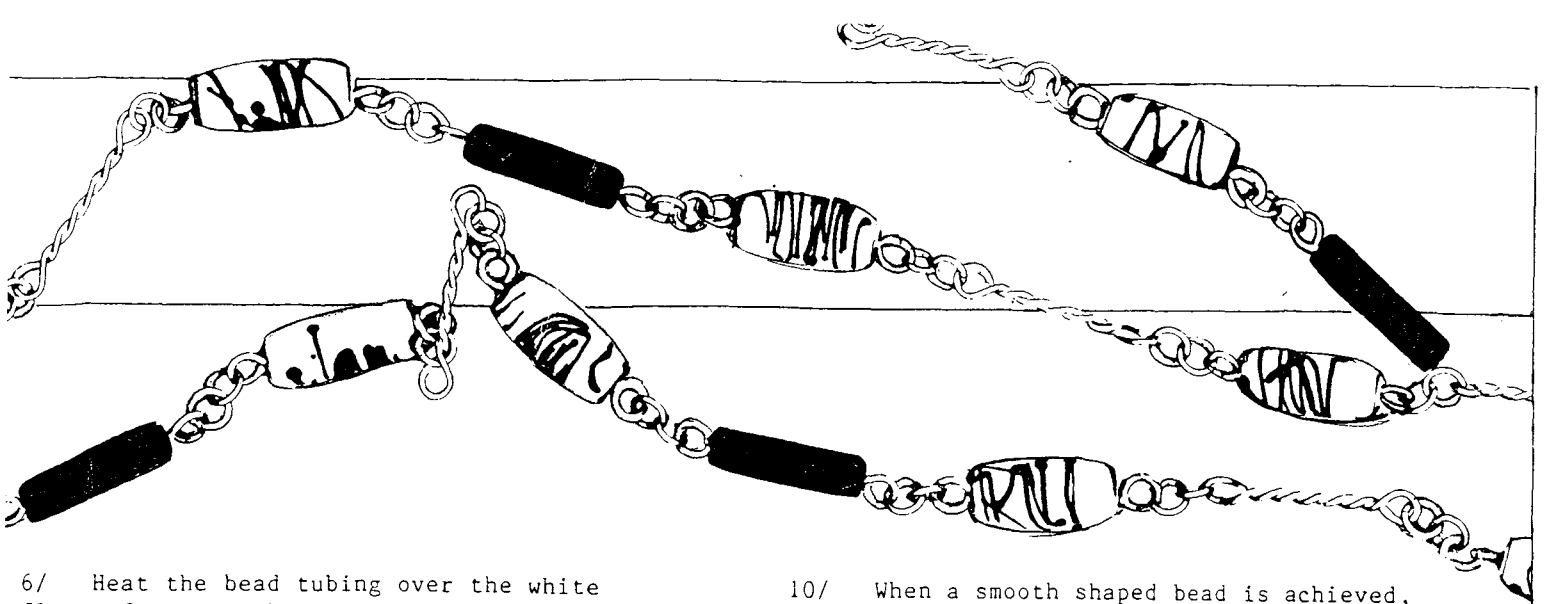
5/ The copper beads are enamelled on a length of stainless steel rod. The rod should be smaller than the hole in the bead as the bead has to be removed immediately or is likely to stick and can be damaged while being removed. My rod is shaped-



with a ledge to stop the bead rolling down the rod and burning my fingers. I grind the end of the rod finer on a grinding wheel.

The tip of the rod should protrude a fraction beyond the end of the bead to keep the end of the tubing from becoming blocked with enamel. Care must be taken to keep the enamel from the bead rod.





6/ Heat the bead tubing over the white flame of the torch. Blue flame will discolour some enamels. Rotate the rod constantly until the tube is red hot.

7/ Roll the hot tubing in the flux and return to the flame until it again reaches the red hot stage.

8/ Dip hot tubing again quickly into next colour returning to the flame as before until the bead is again red hot. This step might need to be repeated 2 - 3 times, depending on the thickness of the bead required. Next, dip the bead into enamel lumps or threads and heat again until the bead is built up to the desired shape and dimension.

The shape is formed by adding enough coats to satisfy, and then as it is in the flame it will burn away towards the ends leaving a nice rounded shape in the middle.



Some of the softer firing enamels will tend to run quickly, and if taken off the rod while red hot will retain a shape like a jug. I quite like using these odd ones.



9/ While the bead is in the molten stage and rotating in the flame, a swirling rod can be dipped in water, (this is to keep the tip cool so that it does not stick to the hot enamel) and lightly touched to the bead. This will create a pleasing pattern of swirls in the colours.



10/ When a smooth shaped bead is achieved, loosen the bead slightly by gently nudging it with a spatula. Remove and leave on the stainless steel sheet to cool. The true enamel colours will appear when the glass has cooled. The bead needs to cool slowly, and will stay hot for about ten minutes.

Some enamels will crack off the ends of some beads no matter what is done. I have been unable to work out why this is so, whether it is the method of firing with some colours or something else altogether.

11/ As enamel can stray onto the firing rod, I keep a mug of water close by, and after removing each bead from the rod, I plunge it into the water. This seems to crack most of the enamel off the rod, though if there is a build up it may need to be filed off.

12/ It sometimes happens that a bead will turn out awful. The enamel can be hammered off and the bead re-enamelled. Before hammering, the firing rod needs to be inserted into the bead so that it keeps its shape and doesn't get flattened.

13/ I thread the finished beads onto lengths of sterling silver wire and then join these with jump rings and twisted wire links. Other bead-makers thread their beads onto tiger-tail and can include other kinds of glass beads with their enamelled ones. I prefer not to do this but it is an individual choice.

About the author

Norma Alce lives in Sydney and is a member of the Enamellers Association. She is an active member of Bankstown District Lapidary Club and Western Suburbs Lapidary Club, where she teaches enamelling.



ENAMEL ON BRAZED METAL FORMS

BY JEAN JENKINS

I have long been dissatisfied with the thin edges on spun copper plates and bowls used as carriers for enamelled art. Rolled edges give strength and finish to spun vessels, but they tend to produce a ragged burned edge. So I have been experimenting with melting the edges of spun vessels, using a #10 oxy-acetylene torch, then brazing the backs with a #1 torch and thin brazing rod. I can build a handsome random texture with the brass brazing rod, either leaving the base smooth or brazing the entire surface. The procedure approximately doubles the weight of the vessel, which I prefer, and strengthens it greatly.

Brass, of course, does not enamel, so after completing the enamelled interior, I patinated the brazed exterior. A handsome variation with patination is to brush-plate the high areas with gold before applying the patina, thereby retaining a bright-dull contrast working with the texture.

The melting point of commercial brazing rod is quite close to the fusing temperature of our enamels. I discovered that there was some softening of the brazed surface during the repeated enamel firings; however this seemed to enhance rather than hurt the brazed texture. Any polishing of the exposed metal should be

done after the enamel and before the patina is added. There are several new polishing wheels available that require a light touch, and these are recommended to avoid undue pressure on the enamel.

Spun vessels can be altered to make them more interesting, by trimming a bit off the edge to make a free-form from a circle, and/or raising or bending the shape off-round. These changes seem to be more effective if they are subtle. Any such alterations to the copper must be completed before the edge is welded or the brass added. The copper form can also be pierced with the torch. Having done this inadvertently with too large a torch, I added 7 or 8 additional small holes and made them into plique-a-jour.

My next torch experiments will be with an oxygen-natural gas torch: cleaner, safer and less expensive. I suspect that a slightly larger flame will be needed, as natural gas does not burn quite as hot as acetylene.

If you try the process with natural gas, let me know how you make out with it.

This article is reprinted from the newsletter of Enamel Guild South. Jean Jenkins is the President of the Northern California Enamel Guild.

ORDERING SUPPLIES FROM OVERSEAS

Sometimes it can be necessary for us to order bits and pieces for our enamelling from overseas suppliers. Generally this is because some items just aren't available here, or because they are a great deal more expensive.

The thought of ordering from overseas can be daunting if you've not done it before, but actually it is a very simple procedure.

Recent technology such as credit cards and fax communications have made it cheaper and faster than ever before.

If the company you're ordering from offers credit card facilities, (and surprisingly several of the American suppliers don't), then it will be a one-step operation. Your order can be processed, the total debited to your account in \$US and then billed on your next credit card account in \$Australian. This saves the laborious procedure of sending an order, then waiting to receive a pro-forma account, sending the exact amount by bank draft, and again waiting to receive the goods. An impossible procedure if goods are needed urgently. The credit card is so much faster, and cheaper too - the service fee for issuing a bank draft at my bank is now \$8.00 per cheque.

Bankcard is not acceptable outside Australia. Mastercard and Visa are the most widely accepted cards.

The other boon to overseas ordering is the fax. I can fax-order at cheap overnight phone rates, and know that the order is received immediately and during their working day. The cost is not all that much dearer than a stamp,

\$1.10 per minute. A short half-page order takes around a minute to transmit.

I have received enamels airmail from England in just 7 days, and from the US in 10 days.

For larger heavy orders it is more economical to be better organised and order ahead of needs so that goods can be sent by surface mail. From the US, this can take two to three months.

I deal with Camden in London for Soyer and Latham enamels; Enamel Emporium in the US for Ninomayer enamels, and Rio Grande in the US for unusual findings and odds and ends, and all give terrific service. They are all geared up for mail-order and are good at it. All except Enamel Emporium have credit-card facilities.

I prefer to deal with local companies where possible, and most are very efficient. Because I live at such a distance from suppliers, I am dependant on them to get goods to me as quickly as possible. Over time I have been able to sort through the quick and the tardy. I recommend Metal Merchants in Sydney for silver and Anna Margot Originals for enamels. Both have been very responsive for me. I guess we all have our favourites who have 'done right' by us. It's important to develop a good relationship with your suppliers, you never know when you may need them to go that extra distance for you. One of my suppliers recently ran to the PO in order to catch the mail with an urgent order for me. Now that's service!

By Carolyn Delzoppo

Supplies

ACV Metals have changed their telephone number. The new number is 02 744 7416, and the fax number remains the same - 02 744 0357. The mailing address is still 67 Regatta Road, Canada Bay NSW 2046.

ACV carry a comprehensive range of copper, brass, nickel silver, gilding metal and monier metal in wire, sheet, and chenier.

For jewellers having difficulty finding a supplier of pin wire for brooch pins, ACV stock .76 stainless steel wire which is suitable for pins. If anyone knows a supplier of lmm stainless steel wire or pinwire, could they let AEN know. It has become difficult to locate lately.

Thompson Silvercraft in Sydney have been taken over by Twin Plaza Metals, a company with branches in Adelaide and Melbourne. They offer Sterling silver sheet, wire, chenier and findings, plus cabachon stones, beads and tools.

Twin Plaza Metals,
Suite 9, 6th Floor, 250 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000.
Telephone 02 264 1667.

Around the Magazines

Craft Arts Issue No 32

Contains:

'A Personal Odyssey' the cloisonne enamel work of Glenice Lesley Matthews, (pp61-64) by Dorothy Erikson.

'Fireworks', story and photographs about the upcoming National Exhibition of Enamels. (pp104-105)

Plus a full page advertisement for 'Fireworks' Exhibition featuring the work of eight enamellers.

Glass on Metal Volume 13, No 5 October 1994

The cover of this issue features a panel 'Bottlenose Dolphin Group' by Victorian artist Allan Heywood. There is also an Inview article about Allan and his work.

Also:

- Experimental Techniques for Acid Etching, by Miriam Fastig, unusual ways of creating pattern and texture on copper using acids.

- Reprint of an address given by Kenneth Bates to the Enamelist Society Convention of 1987.

- Enamel Literature and How to Build a Library, by Woodrow Carpenter.

- Enamel Exhibition in Mexico City, by Miriam Fastag.

- Exhibition reviews and other bits and pieces of enamel news from around the world.

Subscriptions to Glass on Metal are US\$54.00 pa for six issues. The dollar is stronger than its been for a while so its a good time to be buying.

Send US funds or credit card details to -

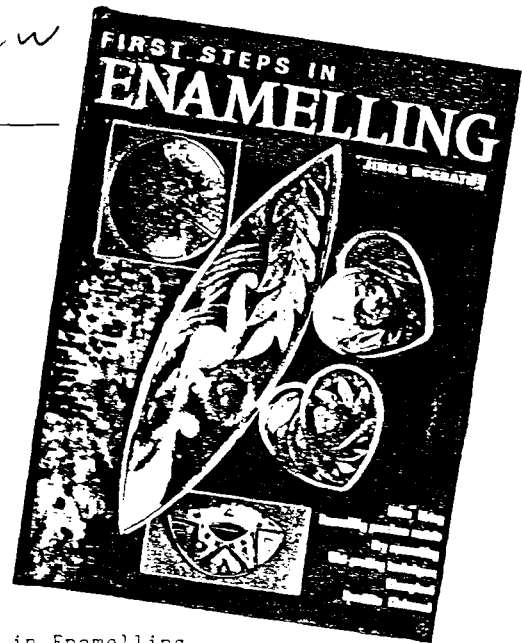
The Enamelist Society,
PO Box 310, Newport, Ky 41072, USA.

Workshop

Places are still available in the workshop 'The Exotics' - basse-taille, champleve, grisaille, limoges, plique-a-jour, etc, with Glenice Lesley Matthews, to be held in Albany WA 9-12 January 1995.

See previous issue, No 28, of AEN for details.

Book review



First Steps in Enamelling by Jinks McGrath

New books on enamel are a rare treat and this one is especially so.

I found this book recently in the remaindered bookshop. Book Warehouse in Ballina for \$14.95. A genuine bargain. I imagine it will be available in other remaindered book outlets also.

It's a handsome, glossy hardcover book that delights the eye with it's luscious production and photographs. The practical text is lavishly illustrated with colour images of the work of England's best known contemporary enamellers - Jane Short, Alexandra Raphael, Tamar Winter, Jessica Turrell, Gillie Hoyt and many others. There are few books in print which have illustrations of contemporary enamelling so this is a particularly valuable reference for beginner enamellers as it shows the current standards and uses of the medium.

The author Jinks McGrath explains everything about enamelling, and the first chapters are particularly useful. She covers kilns and their firing temperatures, tools and equipment, metals including preparation and characteristics, and of course enamels. Preparation and the different methods of applying wet and dry enamel is explained and illustrated. The information is clear and straitforward.

Further chapters have step-by-step projects, starting with dry-dusting simple copper shapes, working through to more advanced techniques such as an etched silver ring. All the projects are well explained with text and instructive colour photographs.

There is also a chapter which explains the more advanced techniques of cloisonne and champleve, plique-a-jour and basse taille etc.

I recommend this book to beginner enamellers as a valuable text, and also to more experienced enamellers as a wonderful treat for the eyes.

Carolyn Delzoppo

Postscript

This book was also listed in a recent catalogue of the mail-order remaindered book dealers, Clouston and Hall, for \$16.95. They can be contacted in Canberra on 008 026 168.

QUESTIONNAIRE —



AEN recently asked enamellers to fill in a questionnaire telling us about the ways and the whys of their enamelling. As I said in the letter sent with the questions, I believe that enamellers have a great curiosity about each other's modus operandi, - about how and why we do the things we do. I asked enamellers not only what they thought about certain things, but most importantly why. It's the why that is of most interest.

These are the responses to the first question -

WHAT BRAND AND TYPE OF ENAMEL DO YOU USE, AND WHY?

Barbara Ryman

Thompson Lead-bearing, for its consistent quality, firing temperature range and good colours. (Now sadly out of production). Latham, for its strong dense colours that are suitable especially for small shallow areas. Schauer, has some beautiful colours and there are good American notes on the firing qualities and reactions (available from Enamelwork Supply Co).

Allan Heywood

Lead-bearing because I've got lots of it. Any brand that looks OK - each brand/manufacturee seems to have several colours that appeal to me. I use Schauer, Uhlig, Thompson, St Paul (Soyer), Degussa, Amaco, Biso and Aoki.

Jacque Sprogoe

Thompson Enamels because of their availability in Australia. (Queensland)

Norma Alce

I use Japanese and French enamels. The colours are superb on silverfoil which I use a lot on brooches and pendants. I mostly use transparents, and definitely only French opalescents.

Heather Calnan

I use Thompsons Leaded and Lead-free for their consistent firing times and good colour variety, and the French Crystallirie St Paul for their clear transparents.

Betty Wilson

Thompson, Schauer and Uhlig - because they were available. When I started enamelling again it was difficult to find all sorts of things. Craft Council of SA gave me some names, and I found Uhlig Enamels at Big R Lapidary who were going out of enamels. They were unpopular colours, but lovely enamels to use.

Mary Raymond

Thompsons lead-free powders for the clarity of colour, though I'm not keen on the LF fluxes. Cristallerie lead bearing powders and lumps - again for the clarity of colour.

Val Annear

Over the years I have gathered just about every brand. I prefer Cristallerie (Soyer) transparents because of the beautiful results I get over silver foil.

Wendy Hall

I have used Thompson lead-bearing transparent enamels since I began enamelling in 1979. I was very familiar with the colour palette and idiosyncrasies of these enamels and was horrified when Thompson ceased their production. I recently tried a few Cristallerie LB transparents and found to be very clean, beautiful, Thompson-compatible colours.

Karin Luz

Schauer opal and transparent, because they're more brilliant. Also used Uhlig which have a lower melting point and I could buy them for half price.

Jenny Gore

In opaque enamels - Thompsons leaded. The only opaque colours that work for me, especially for the grisaille technique. In transparents - Thompsons, Blythe, Schauer, anything I can get my hands on, also leaded. I don't like the 'feel' of unleaded enamel when sifting and I have too much stock to change to unleaded.

Elaine Palmer

Thompson lead-bearing, but have had to change to the French leaded which is lovely.

Heidi Wellings

Thompsons opaque and transparents, mostly lead-bearing, which were readily available when I commenced enamelling. Also lead-bearing French Soyer enamels. I was sent a large free sample pack which have some wonderful transparents. I work with both brands as they are compatible. I use lead-free only when a colour I want is not available in leaded.

Hiltrud Blaich

Schauer mostly, because I know the colours very well and can order the transparents from my agent in Pforzheim ready washed. Use some Thompson too. The beautiful enamels for my boxes and beads come from Ball in England.

continued over

QUESTIONNAIRE - continued

TIPS FOR TAKING SLIDES

Carolyn Delzoppo

I have been mucking about with them all, still trying to find a good reliable everyday working enamel to replace the Thompson leaded. I didn't appreciate just how good this enamel was until I tried to find an alternative. No one brand offers all the colours that I want, and no brand anywhere has colours like the lovely denim blue of Pigeon or the soft grey green of Old Silver. Most brands of colours are quite gaudy and it's difficult to achieve any subtlety. I now mostly use Blythe because they're available here, and they're reliable with some lovely violets and purples. Unfortunately they have only limited blues (3 tones) and the greens are garish. The flux is fairly soft so care must be taken when using it under reds as they can fire through, turning brown or orange. I've also been using the Japanese Ninomayer enamels for my exhibition work. Again the colours are limited but there are some lovely soft tones.

Helen Fitzhardinge

I use the Thompson unleaded enamels, from Anna Margot in Brisbane. I find her service marvellous. I use mainly transparents as I love the depth and layers of colour that can be achieved.

Next Issue the questions will be -

What book has been most helpful to you and why?

What book would you recommend to a beginner?

If you would like to add your opinion to this survey, you are most welcome to participate.

Other questions to be covered are -

What enamel works do you admire and why?

If you could have one enamel wish, what would it be?

While you're enamelling, what do you like to listen to if anything?

Do you have a favourite technique, tip or discovery that you'd like to pass on to other enamellers?

The Americal Craft Council recently published this checklist of common errors we make when taking slides.

- Overexposure, resulting in too light a slide.
- Underexposure, resulting in too dark a slide.
- Hot spot: a light saturated point in the picture. (Enamels with shiny surfaces are particularly apt to suffer from this one).
- Dead area: surface of the object is underlit and appears dark.
- Incorrect or distorted colour: wrong film type.
- Background too busy: scenery, objects or figures make too much clutter.
- Background too sloppy; wrinkled cloth, for example can distract.
- Background too textured: again distracting.
- Distance between camera and object too great: results in too small an image.
- Distance too short: results in partial view, or cut-off area.
- Too many objects in one slide.
- Absence of detail shots: some works require close-ups to be fully understood.

Before you send off your slides to enter a juried exhibition, look at them with a projector and with a critical eye. Often, a professional photographer is the answer. This can be costly but it may also be a good business investment.

One more tip on taking slides:

I have found that the best background for my enamels is a grey card, which can be purchased at any camera or art store. Bright colours can be dramatic but often distract from the colours in your work.

This article by Audrey Komrad is reprinted from the October Issue of the Enamel Guild South Newsletter.

International Events

British Society of Enamellers - Christmas Exhibition

9 December 1994 - 8 January 1995

Guildhall Gallery, Winchester, England.

British Society of Enamellers

3rd International Conference.

24 - 27 March 1995,

West Dean College, Chichester, Sussex, England.

'Hands on' demonstrations, slide presentations and round table discussions.

Copies of the Conference brochure are available from AEN. Send two 45¢ stamps. Bookings need to be in before the 31 December.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions - 6 issues per year

Regular - \$16.00

Student - \$8.00

New Zealand Air Mail - \$20.00

Overseas Economy Airmail - \$20.00

Australian Enamel Newsletter

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