

Australian Enamel Newsletter

Issue No 24

February 1994

Enameller profile — Karin Luz

About four years ago I was looking around for like minded people to share and exchange ideas in enamel, but somehow I got 'sidetracked'. I am now delighted to find an active community of enamellers. My decision to scale down on enamelling flew out of the window when I received an invitation to participate in an all enamel exhibition at the Janine Tanzer Gallery in November. I was very impressed by the work there - a very high standard indeed.

I am pleased to introduce my work and myself to the readers of AEN. As a teenager many autumns ago I decided to take up an apprenticeship in enamelling, because it involved the use of colour and it was something unusual, something different and not like office work, teaching or nursing. But to work in the industry as an enameller is not so glamorous - it is repetitive and somewhat boring no matter how 'colourful' the job is. The enamel had to be ground with a mortar and pestle and after thorough washing was wet-packed into stamped out badges. The finished work resembled cloisonne work.

At the 'Kunst und Werkschule' now called 'Akademie der Bildenden Kuenste' in Pforzheim, **Germany** I learned and practised the art of Gold and Silversmithing as well as a great variety of techniques in enamelling like cloisonne, champleve, working with foils and oxides, dry application and plique-a-jour. This time was the highlight of my career, especially witnessing and experiencing the development of a new technique called 'drop enamel', which unfortunately was badly received.

Enamel was very popular in the late 50's and early 60's, and I was very lucky in being employed in an artistic workshop producing copper pendants and bracelets using transparent enamel on silver foil. The different colours and designs were achieved by wet-packing, a kind of lineless cloisonne. I personally refer to this type of enamelling as free style, and which is the base for my current work. I am constantly experimenting along this line by stretching the medium to the limits.

Between then and now are many years of non-creativity, dissolution and frustration accompanied by culture shock of a new way of life here in Australia. In hindsight I am not lamenting over lost time. On the contrary. Ten years ago I became involved in organising Arts Exhibitions at my son's school which brought me into contact with some very well known artists. This became my road to artistic recovery. In the last five years I have taken up enamelling again and organise my own art and craft exhibitions. I have started silk painting and have joined the Waverley Arts Society where I am currently President - the first crafts person in its history.

Events keep happening and I am very excited about making contact with enamellers.
It feels like coming home.



News

I was a bit ahead of myself with the last issue, calling it Issue Number 24, rather than Number 23 as it should have been. So there are two Issues Number 24 and no Number 23. Got that? All clear?

AEN has again expanded to three A3 sheets (12 pages) to make room for reports and photos of the 3rd National Exhibition of Enamel. Unfortunately I wasn't able to get to Sydney to see it this year, but all feedback was very positive. Congratulations to the Enamellers Association for a terrific effort in organising and running the exhibition so successfully. It is a tremendous effort. There is an exhibition report by Wendy Hall on page 3.

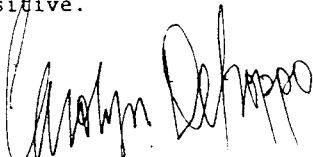
The cover enameller for February is Karin Luz from Melbourne. In her profile Karin mentions a technique she calls 'drop enamel'. Answering my enquiry Karin explained "Drop enamel is three dimensional plique-a-jour where the enamel forms a drop, in contrast to a plique-a-jour bowl, which though it is also three dimensional, the enamel is flat". Karin has offered to write more about this technique later in the year. We are hoping to make it a double-page technical article.

This issue is earlier than usual. I'm trying to be organised as I'm moving house on the 28th January. Smaller house, bigger workshop, quieter location, bigger garden. It's going to be good. My PO box address will remain the same, as will the telephone and fax number.

Best wishes to everyone for a terrific 1994.

I think it's going to be a better one for many people. The economy is starting to move again, things seem more positive.

Regards



Editor

The deadline for material for the next issue will be March 23. Submissions are very welcome, and AEN is always pleased to hear of enamel doings and activity.

Material can be faxed to 066 841 772 or mailed to PO Box 418, Mullumbimby 2482 NSW.

Barbara Ryman has just been notified that a brooch she submitted has won an award at the 7th Annual Cloisonne jewellery Competition at the Shippo Conference in Japan. As yet she doesn't have details. There are seven or eight awards given. Carolyn Delzoppo was surprised to read recently in a Spanish enamel magazine that she won the sponsors award at this event in 1993. As all the material returned with the work had been in Japanese, she had been blissfully unaware.

This information is reprinted from the current Thompson Enamel catalogue -

Food Contact Surfaces

We do not recommend the use of our enamels for food contact surfaces. Although they are very acid resistant and do not contain lead, their final food safe properties may depend on enamel application and firing. Each item made from Thompson Enamel products should be individually tested to determine whether or not it passes current FDA regulations.

Conference

Guild of Craft Enamellers Conference/AGM
8 - 10 April 1994
University of Warwick, England.

The conference will be a weekend programme of illustrated talks, masterclasses, trade stands and tutorial workshops on plique-a-jour, enamel painting, cloisonne, oxides and foils, and high firing of bowls.

For further information, contact the Guild, C/- Judith Harris, Chiverlins House, Derriads, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN140RJ. Telephone 0249 65 2236. Or send SAE to AEN.

Around the Magazines

Glass on Metal - magazine of the US Enamelist Society - Volume 12 No6 December 1993

Contains two articles on enamelled badges and the enamel used in their manufacture in the 19th and 20th Centuries, also, a scientific appreciation of some recent Chinese cloisonne, a study of the influence of medieval European enamels on 16th century Chinese enamelling, and a how-to article on a technique using stencilling, liquid enamel, sgriffito and acid etch. This issue also contains a bibliography of books and periodicals of Chinese enamels, as well as exhibition and guild reports.

Tuition

Jeweller and enameller Barbara Ryman is hoping to be able to offer classes in cloisonne enamelling in Sydney later this year if they can be arranged. If you are interested in being involved, ring Barbara on 02 660 1316.

Thank you

Thank you to the following contributors to this issue - Karin Luz, Jean McKenzie, Audrey Komrad, Wendy Hall, Janine Tanzer Gallery, Tamworth Art Gallery, UK Guild of Craft Enamellers, Arch Raymond for the exhibition photographs, CIDAE Spain, Sydney Morning Herald, Mary Raymond, Barbara Ryman.

ENAMELING: GLASS ACT

by David Federman MJ Executive Editor

"The jewelry industry is a jungle of misnomers," says period jewelry expert Jeanenne Bell, Jewelry Box Antiques, Kansas City, Mo. And nowhere is her point better taken than with enameling, a decorative art that involves laying, melting and fusing colored glass on metal.

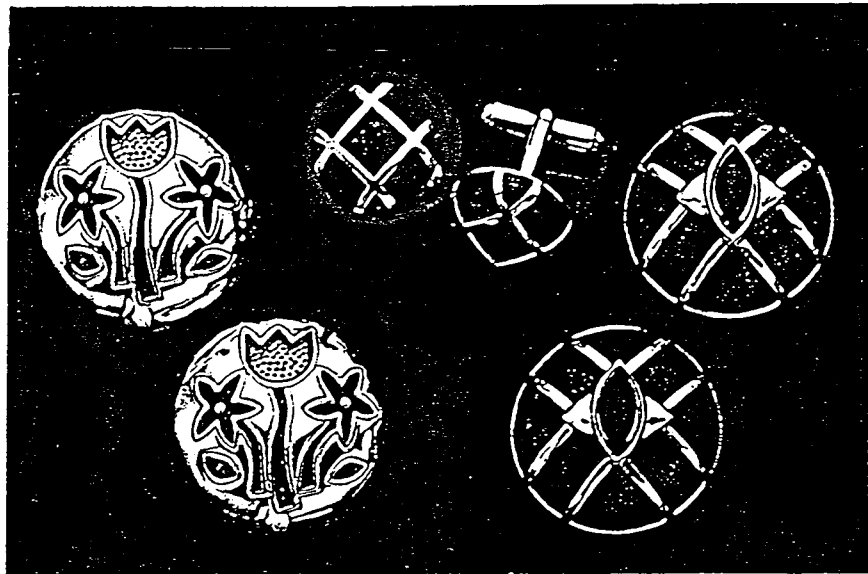
Practiced in Europe since at least the 1300s, when jewelry artisans began to adorn brooches and the like with glass-enamel motifs and scenes, the art has grown into a massive tributary system of techniques and sub-specialties—the most famous of which are cloisonné and champlevé (pronounced champ-le-vay). But no matter what form enameling took, glass was its one constant. In fact, enamel and glass were synonyms.

All this changed around the turn of the century when, says master enamelist Bill Helwig, Newport, Ky., "the paint industry invented full-gloss paint that could replicate a glass surface and named it 'enamel.' America, which has no major tradition of enameling, proved very vulnerable to this misuse of terminology."

The somewhat panoramic definition of "enamel" in Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary (1983) proves Helwig right: "a glassy, colored, opaque substance fused to surfaces of metals, glass, and pottery as an ornamental or protective coating."

Among the latest additions to the list of substances now called enamel are epoxy—a hard, adhesive polymer resin used, says Webster's, "in glues, enamel coatings, etc." The trouble is that very often retailers aren't told the epoxy-coated bracelets, earrings and rings they buy as enamel jewelry are resin-layered rather than glass-enamelled. Instead, they are told their jewelry is made by a newer "cold enamel"—as opposed to the traditional "hot enamel"—method. The distinction sounds like one based solely on differences of temperature when, in fact, it is based on crucial differences of material, one (glass) organic, the other (epoxy) inorganic. (Sometimes the difference between epoxy and glass enamel is expressed as "soft" versus "hard" enamel, a reference to the fact that epoxy is a liquid and glass a solid.)

The situation gets sticky because a lot of epoxy-enamel jewelry is quite stunning, involving artistry and workmanship that are often as intricate and creative as that of glass enameling. Even stickier, the greater hardness of epoxy lends it to use in commercial jewelry. "From a durability standpoint, colored resins are far more practical



Button earrings in enamel and sterling silver and enamel cufflinks in 24k gold over sterling silver, from Nancy & Rise. New York.

than colored glass for bracelets," world-famous enamelist Bill Harper admits.

Yet Harper, like Helwig, resents calling something that's not a glass by the name of glass. These two are far from alone. A check of seven manuals on enameling at my local library made it clear that practitioners of the art are in accord on defining enamel as solely a vitreous (glass) medium. But, wait a minute. Painting jewelry with high-gloss substances other than glass has been going on for so long that many in the trade view the mere application of any such coating as enameling. That being the case, shouldn't enamelists stop being so hard-nosed and accept the expanded meaning of the word? "Do diamond dealers accept it when cubic zirconia is called 'diamonique' in the hope that it will be thought of as diamond-like?" Harper fires back. "Well, calling epoxy an enamel is worse."

Nevertheless, it's just as legal. Selling epoxy-coated jewelry as enamel breaks no law and, as far as we know, violates no trade rule. So it is highly doubtful the term will ever return to the original, far more restrictive meaning purists use. Yet manufacturers could possibly volunteer, or be required to prefix the term "enamel" with the name of the substance being applied—glass-enamel, resin-enamel, etc. This compromise is a lot fairer to consumers than vague terms such as "hot" and "cold" enamel. Ultimately, though, says Harp-

er, we must go beyond labels. "It's not what you call something that matters, but what you do with it," he says.

The hot stuff

The glass enamel most manufacturers use comes in finely ground powder form, with metallic oxides added to make around 300 colors. In addition, European enamels usually have one extra ingredient, lead, which some enamelists stubbornly believe boosts brilliance in a piece's final finish. Because U.S. environmental laws forbid making lead-based glass, many artists have staged what Helwig calls a "rebellion" and relied on imported enamels.

Whether domestic or foreign-made, enamel is produced in a fairly standard fashion. Batches of powdered glass, with their colorants added, are melted in a crucible and kept in a molten state until the glass has a silky consistency with no lumps or air bubbles. Next, the melt is ladled on to a cooling tray, much like pancake batter on a grill, where it forms a solid mass. After being rolled into sheets, this mass is re-crushed into small particles which are sieved by machine to attain as much uniformity of size, or mesh, as possible. This graded glass powder is then housed for sale in just about every kind of container from small bags and bottles to large barrels and drums.

When it comes time to use the enamel, a binding agent such as water or alcohol that helps with adhesion to the metal is added and the liquid/solid mixture applied with a variety of tools, including needles and spatulas. Next, the fresh-coated piece is vibrated so that the glass particles will settle and the liquid

ENAMELING: GLASS ACT

Continued

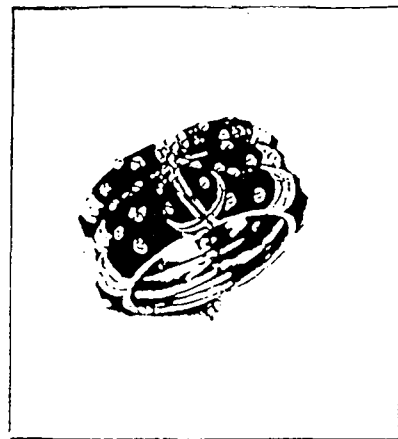
rise to the top. Once the liquid is blotted off and the enamel dried, the piece is put in a kiln for what enamelists call "firing." This process melts and fuses the enamel to the metal. Firing lasts anywhere from one to 24 minutes, depending on the temperature (generally 1,350 to 1,550 degrees Fahrenheit). Temperatures and times vary according to the metal being enameled. The higher the temperature, the shorter the piece's stay in the kiln.

Epoxy, on the other hand, is applied by brush in a semi-liquid form and baked for 24 hours at around 800 degrees Fahrenheit, according to Leopoldi Poli of La Nouvelle Bague, Florence, Italy. Considered one of the leaders in the resurgence of enameled jewelry, Poli is nonetheless an iconoclast because he openly espouses epoxy as the best modern medium for it. His reasons aren't, as critics accuse, merely economic. Although resin enameling is generally a far less expensive technique than glass enameling, Poli says custom effects, including marbling that gives his finishes the look of tortoise shell and malachite, raise his manufacturing

costs considerably. In any case, he insists, use of epoxy is practically mandatory for enamel bracelets and rings to prevent chipping and cracking.

No doubt about it, cracking is the number one problem with glass-enameled jewelry. But instead of switching to epoxy, more and more designers are following the lead of Miami Beach's Sylvio Hidalgo and putting raised gold studs at regular intervals across the surface of their pieces to cushion them from damaging blows. Hidalgo's artful use of studs in his designs has actually made a virtue of necessity and become a pleasing signature of his work.

Evaluating enamel jewelry takes a tutored eye. "Pieces can look beautiful in terms of design, yet still be lacking from a technical standpoint," says Helwig. "I recently saw a full-page color ad for enamel jewelry by a major jeweler. The piece shown has warpage and cracking. Now if I could see these flaws in a photograph, you can imagine how off the mark the piece was. But I doubt anyone knew enough about the actual art of enameling to see these problems. It's very easy to be blinded by the aesthetic beauty of enameling." □



Three stackable rings in 18k gold with green and blue enamel from Hidalgo Corp., Miami Beach. The rings can be worn separately.

This article first appeared in Modern Jeweller magazine, March 1993, and is reprinted from the US Enamel Guild South newsletter.

Diary

11 February	Deadline for applications for invitation to 16th Mornington Peninsular Craft Event. See Issue 22 for details.
25 Feb- 8 April	Stanthorpe Arts Festival, Queensland.
27 April	Deadline for receipt of entry forms, Annual Alice Craft Acquisition, Alice Springs NT. See previous issue for details.
20 May - 12 June	Annual Alice Craft Acquisition, Alice Springs, NT.
July - August	Biennale Internationale de L'email, Limoges, France.

Subscriptions

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PO Box 418 Mullumbimby NSW 2482

Subscriptions - 6 issues per year

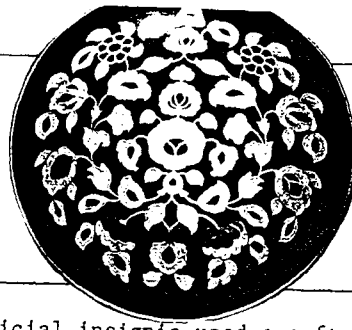
Regular - \$16.00

Student - \$8.00

New Zealand Airmail - \$18.00

Overseas Economy Airmail - \$18.00

A visit to the Japan Mint Bureau



When I was planning to go to Japan to attend the presentation ceremony of the Enamel Exhibition, I was asked by the Royal Australian Mint to make a goodwill visit to the Japan Mint Bureau as their representative. Of course I said I would. The Japan Mint Bureau has an established technical relationship with the Canberra Mint.

I have been enamelling the Order of Australia and other works for the Canberra Mint for several years now.

The visit was very interesting and the Japan Mint kindly supplied me with an excellent English speaker so I was able to ask a lot of questions.

The Mint produces a large range of official insignia as well as enamelled paperweights, traditional plaques and presentation pieces.

There were about 20 men working in the metal department, all sitting at separate benches preparing the silver blanks for enamelling, as well as other objects. Everything was done painstakingly by hand - not a machine in sight. The stamped pieces are sawn away from the excess sheet and the saw cut edges filed and smoothed to a high finish with a sharp scraping tool.

In the next room about 15 enamellers, some of them women, were working in complete silence. I was told that both the metalworkers and the enamellers are taken directly from school and undertake a fifteen year apprenticeship. 15 Years!

All the enamellers worked in a similar way. They were filling recesses in the metal with enamel using either a fine brush or a pointed bamboo stick. The enamel was placed precisely in position with a rapid jabbing movement between the piece and the wet enamel which was sitting in a small tilted saki cup. Not a grain was spilled or out of place.

Each enameller was filling just one colour. Not one person looked up from their work while our touring party wandered around them. They worked hard!

Trays of dried pieces were then taken to a small room off the side where two kilns were in operation. Each enamel was transferred to a small sheet of steel and then four sheets at a time were put into the kiln onto triangular bars. The firer (for want of a better word) gauged when the enamel was fired by watching through a small hole in the door. When the steel plate reached the desired colour, the enamel was removed. The two pieces at the back were taken out first, and the front ones moved to the back until they reached the correct colour also. I was very surprised to see that the two men, specialists at firing, wore no protective eye-wear at all, even though they peered through a bunghole all day. This concentrated exposure to infra-red rays is known to cause cataracts and other eye problems.

The fired pieces were then ground and polished, also by hand. Jewellers wearing white cotton gloves assembled the completed insignia.

The Mint also had a small blast furnace where they manufacture their own enamels to their own recipes.

The official insignia used a soft opaque violet, opaque green and white and transparent blue and red. A clear flux was fired under the red to give a rich glowing colour.

The Chairman of the Japan Enamel Artist Association, Mr Aida, a spritely 89 year old gentleman, had worked at the Mint for 40 years as an engraver and enameller. The Mint is very supportive of the Enamellers Assoc.

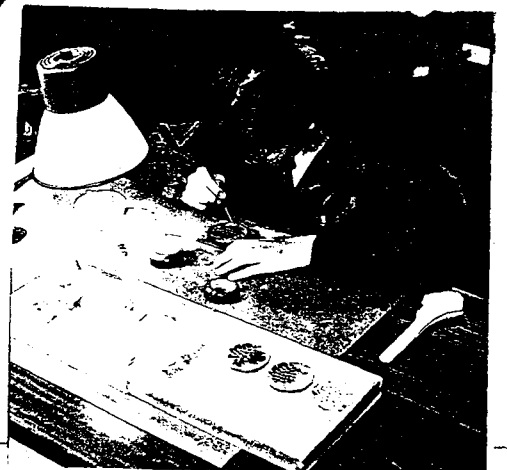
The work of the Mint was really beautiful, an excellent standard, and exquisite. The attention to detail and consistent high standard reflects I believe, the regard in which enamelling is held in Japan. The commercial objects they make are very expensive, yet there is a good market for them. The Mint has its own shop and a museum on the grounds of the complex.

This was a wonderful opportunity to see a commercial enamelling department in operation and to realise that even though there may be small differences in procedures between enamellers everywhere in the world, basically we are all using the same materials and processes to the same end.

Carolyn Delzoppo



Paperweights



Exhibitions

Janine Tanzer Gallery in Melbourne report a positive response both with attendance and sales to their November 'Australian Enamellers' exhibition. Those taking part were:

Stacey Allen	Karin Luz
Marguerite Andel	Therese O'Donaghue
Margaret Cameron	Jill Parnell
Pierre Cavalan	Jacquie Sprogoe
Carolyn Delzoppo	Janine Tanzer
Les Hay	Heidi Wellings
Sandra Kerr	Jenny Williams
Fiona Knox	Ross Williams
Catherine Large	Annette Clarke
Barbara Turner	Judith Maree Watts

The following review of the exhibition appeared in the Melbourne Age, Tuesday 23 November

Craft Centre. But particularly exciting is a range of enamelled jewellery shown by Janine Tanzer and innovative designs in anodised aluminium by Paul Evans and Michael Fletcher featured at Craft Victoria.

OF THE 20 'Australian Enamellists', Tanzer is among the best. Her series of fine silver hollow-ware brooches are decorated by the 'plique-a-jour' method of drilling tiny dots and dashes into the metal surface and then filling them with colored enamel. Tanzer combines understated ornament with satisfying forms and excellent crafting. Conversely, Carolyn Delzoppo's smooth abstract brooches and neck-piece are made by the cloisonne method, whereby the design is outlined with soldered silver wires between which the enamel is applied. Tanzer and Delzoppo have brought these traditional enamelling techniques to a very high standard of contemporary expression.

The 'Contemporary Wearables' Exhibition of Jewellery 1993, organised by the Toowoomba Art gallery will be touring Northern NSW and Queensland during 1994.

The exhibition which includes award winners and pieces acquired for the Art Gallery permanent collection is well worth seeing.

Tour dates:

- Stanthorpe Art Gallery - 10 Jan - 11 Feb
- Warwick Regional Gallery - 20 Feb - 20 March
- Griffith Art Gallery - mid April - early May
- Brisbane City Hall Art Gallery - 1 June - 4 July
- Tweed River Regional Gallery - 13 July - 7 August
- Blackwater Art Gallery - 15 Aug - 29 Aug
- Dalby Art Gallery - 20 Sept - 12 Oct

Change of Address

Robert Cutforth
2 Oakleigh Ave, Taroona 7053 Tasmania

Books

Ladybird Gems and Jewellers Gemmological Books and Instruments.

\$op 528, Pitt Street Level,
Royal Arcade, 255 Pitt Street, Sydney 2000
Telephone 02 261 4366

Ladybird stock a comprehensive listing of books of interest to jewellers.

The proprietor Jean McKenzie has a huge selection of titles - antique jewellery, design, jewellery collecting, lapidary and gemmology, mineralogy and jewellery making.

A catalogue is available.

The Jewelry and Enamels of Louis Comfort Tiffany
Janet Zapata \$79.95 rrp.

The designing of jewellery played only a minor part in Tiffany's activities until 1907, five years after he joined his father's firm as Artistic Director and Vice-President.

It was for Tiffany and Co that he produced some of his finest pieces, combining gemstones, enamelling and metalwork in designs of high originality and unusual refinement as well as delightful objects made of enamel on copper such as vases, bowls and boxes.

Janet Zapata, who worked for a number of years with Tiffany and Co archives, has made a special study of the lifetime achievements of Louis Comfort Tiffany and gives a detailed and informative account of this hitherto neglected aspect of his output.

An impressive selection of colour and black and white photographs illustrate these highly values masterpieces of the jewellers art.

Hardcover - 142 illustrations - 84p in colour.
176 pages.

Supplies

Thompson Enamels have released new lead-free colours to add to their range. They are:

- 1055 Op White, 1060 Op White, 1693 Op Blue,
- 1698 Op Blue, 2009 Tr Clear, 2838 Tr Red,
- 2839 Tr Red, 2837 Tr Red.

Anna Margot Originals (Milltons) in Brisbane stock the new colours.



ACIDS use and safety

Acids have many uses in the enamellers workshop. They can be used to remove oxides and firescale from metals, to etch metal for champléve or basse-taille techniques, and more rarely nitric acid can be used in the preparation of transparent enamel powders.

Some enamels are not resistant to some acids and can be quite strangely affected when refired after being exposed to the acid. When using copper that will need to be acid cleaned between firings, it is wise to test colours on scrap pieces of metal to check their resistance. Opaque whites and some leadfree enamels are especially susceptible.

Salt and vinegar

Salt and vinegar is a safe and reasonable alternative to acid for cleaning metals, especially when working with children.

To prepare: slowly stir one tablespoon of salt into one pint of vinegar. For smaller quantities, add one teaspoon of salt to one cup of vinegar. Salt and vinegar mixture is slower working than acids, Coca-cola and Pepsi will also clean copper, though very slowly.

Commercial Pickles

Commercial pickles such as Sparex and Procraft are also reasonably safe products for cleaning copper, gilding metal and silver.

Use only as directed on the container and test enamels for resistance.

Nitric Acid

For general cleaning of silver, gold, copper and gilding metal.

Nitric acid for cleaning metal is prepared by mixing a solution of one part nitric to four parts water. Remember AAA - always add acid to water, never the other way around which can cause a violent chemical reaction.

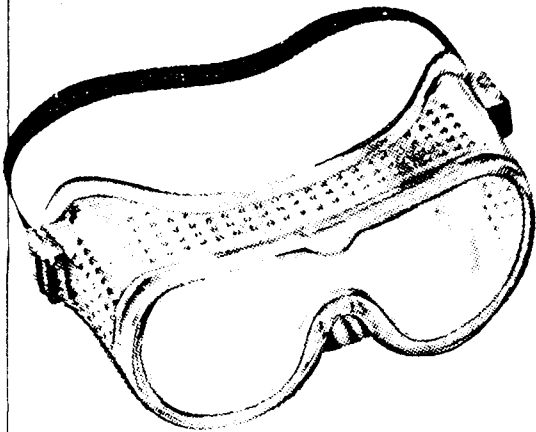
Nitric acid can harm soldered joints so care should be taken not to leave work in the acid for excessive times.

Some enamellers add 2-3 drops of nitric acid to washed transparent enamels to remove any organic matter that may remain. The acid is quickly and thoroughly flushed away by further rinsing in distilled water. This process is used when absolute clarity of colour is required. It can also have the effect of raising the firing temperature of the enamel.

Nitric acid can also be used to etch copper and silver for champléve and basse taille techniques, though it has a tendency to undercut in deeper recesses. Nitric is more suited to shallow etching, as for basse taille textures. Ferric chloride is better suited for champléve etching of copper.

Sulphuric acid

Sulphuric acid can be used for general cleaning of gold, silver, copper and gilding metal. For a general pickle use a solution of one part acid to fifteen parts water.



Some pointers

- Wear protective gloves and eye goggles when handling acids. It is easy for work to slip from tongs and splashing to occur. Protect your eyes!
- Undiluted acids can burn the respiratory tract, so breathing apparatus should be worn when mixing acid solutions.
- Never add water to acid. Violent chemical reactions can occur. Remember AAA - always add acid to water, gently pouring the acid down the side of the water container to avoid splashes.
- Always keep bicarbonate of soda (alkaline neutraliser) handy where the acids are used. This can be used to neutralise any spills or can be rubbed into the skin after washing if splashing has occurred. Treat all spills in the acid area as though they are acid, just in case.
- Use only non-ferrous (copper, brass), or plastic or wood tongs in acids. Ferrous metals (stainless steel, binding wire) will contaminate the acid setting up a galvanising effect which will plate the metal with copper. Contaminated acid will need to be discarded.

In the workshop

by Carolyn Delzoppo

Sulphuric acid can be used to prepare sterling silver for for enamelling. The process is called bright dipping, and is a way of creating a layer of pure silver on the surface of the sterling. This pure silver layer doesn't oxidise during enamelling, though if it is disturbed by grinding or polishing and then refired, firescale will form. The metal is heated to annealing temperature either in the kiln or with a torch, and then quenched in acid. This process of heating and pickling is repeated five or six times to remove copper from the surface of the sterling and leave a thin layer of pure silver. Finally the metal surface is brushed with a glass or brass brush and soaked in bicarbonate of soda for about an hour to neutralise any acid residue. Use a solution of one part acid to fifteen parts water.

Ferric chloride

Ferric chloride is used for etching copper and gilding metal, where it gives a cleaner and sharper cut than nitric acid. To prepare: dissolve the powder or crystals in warm water to make a 50:50 saturated solution. For quicker and cleaner results, etch the metal face side down on a plastic support so that the etched residue drops away, and agitate frequently.

Hydrofluoric Acid

Hydrofluoric acid is an extremely hazardous substance. It is a clear colourless liquid having the unique property of attacking glass and silica based material. It is one of the few substances that will attack

titanium and niobium. It is used to remove enamel from the surface of metals. In mild forms it is also used to give a frosted surface to enamels, though sand blasting is a safer method. The commercial glass etching product 'Armour Etch' contains hydrofluoric acid in a very diluted form.

Hydrofluoric acid is not recommended for use by enamellers unless they are fully equipped with the proper safety equipment. Both the liquid and the fumes are very toxic to the eyes, skin, respiratory and digestive tracts.

If it is necessary to reclaim metal that has been unsuccessfully enamelled, it is preferable to take the object to a commercial glass processor. Any business that does glass frosting will most likely have etching facilities for hydrofluoric.

If hydrofluoric acid is kept in the workshop, very stringent safety precautions and procedures should be adopted. The acid should be stored in a well ventilated area in clearly labelled polypropylene plastic containers. Other plastics can dissolve.

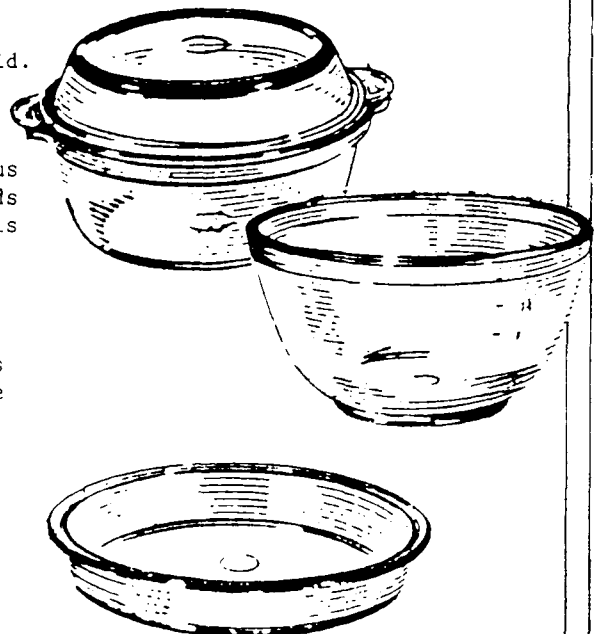
Goggles, chemical breathing equipment, two pairs of gloves and a protective apron should be worn when handling HF. Always keep a solution of acid neutraliser closeby in case of spills or splashes. Hydrated lime is a preferable neutraliser to bicarbonate of soda. HF and bicarb give off toxic fumes when mixed together. Anyone with HF on their premises should also keep calcium gluconate powder or gel closeby to massage into the skin if exposure does occur. In severe cases of skin exposure, calcium gluconate is injected into the flesh to try to neutralise the acid before it damages the bone structure.

about acids

- Warm acid will work more quickly than room temperature acid. To warm the acid, sit a lidded pyrex dish in water in an old electric frypan or crockpot and set the thermostat low. As the water heats, so will the acid in the inner container. Never heat acids directly over heat. Wear breathing apparatus when using heated acids to avoid the fumes. Do not heat acids in the workshop unless a strong extractor or a fume cupboard is installed. Never boil acids as the fumes are extremely dangerous.

- Always clearly mark acid containers with contents and percentage of dilution. Keep lids secure. Concentrated acids should be kept in a locked compartment if small children have access to the workshop.

- To dispose of acids, dilute with as much water as the container will hold. Neutralise with bicarbonate of soda before flushing down the sink with plenty of running water. Wear breathing apparatus while neutralising the acid as fumes are given off. It is illegal to pour undiluted acids into drains. Copper pipes and lead solder joints of plumbing can be corroded.



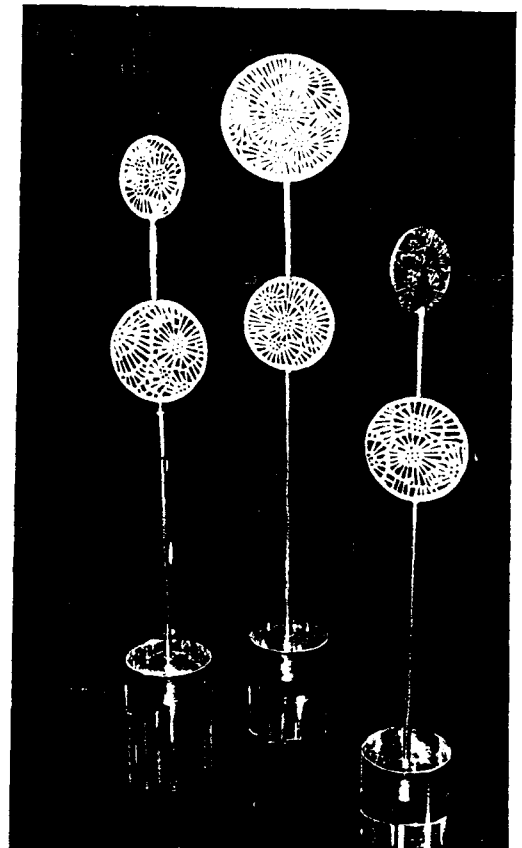
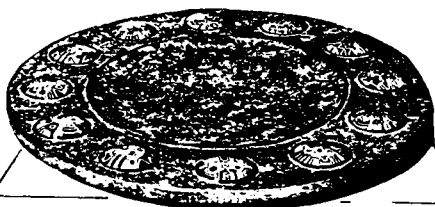
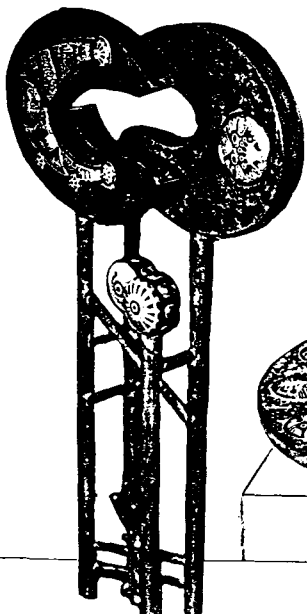
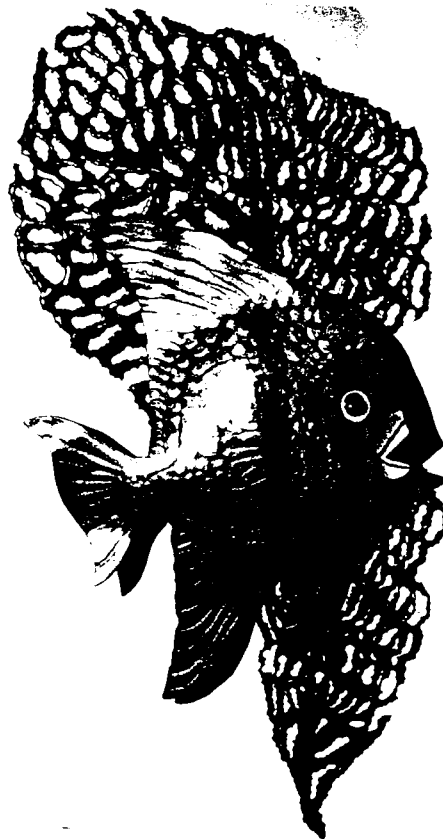
Third National Exhibition of Enamels



The 3rd National Exhibition of Enamels has been a great success with very positive responses from the many visitors, as well as excellent sales. Figures for this year, at more than \$17,000 have exceeded last years total of almost \$15,000, despite visitor numbers and sales being badly affected in the first week by the Sydney bushfires. Much comment was made about the apt or inapt title of the exhibition - The Art of Fire.

Almost all exhibitors sold some of their work, with several selling out. In general buyers seemed most responsive to the unusual and different. In jewellery, the flamboyant bright and interesting pieces were the most popular, especially if affordable. Work was again sold to the many international visitors who visit the gallery when in the popular Rocks tourist area. Enamels have gone to Korea, US, England and Belgium.

There will be a 4th National in 1995. The popularity of this event (as well as the sales figures) should be a great incentive for enamellers who haven't yet participated to do so in 95. This has become a prestigious annual event, and is a wonderful showcase for the best of Australian enamelling. It's not too early to start planning to be part of it.



Enamel - The Art Of Fire -

Building on the success of last year's show at Craftspace Gallery, the 3rd National Exhibition of Enamels opened on January 5, 1994.

'Enamel - the Art of Fire' was officially opened by the Governor of NSW, who had, ironically, spent an extremely hot day viewing the beginnings of the bushfire emergency on the NSW central coast. He gave a brief but humorous talk and he and his wife spent considerable time looking carefully at all on display. Afterwards a group of about sixteen enamellers and friends had dinner together at the Waterfront Restaurant to toast the success of the exhibition.

The Exhibition's Committee members decided to accept Craftspace's offer to extend the exhibition until Australia Day, January 26. This decision was taken to allow the work maximum exposure and sales opportunities, even though sales had surpassed the impressive 1993 figures by the original closing date of January 16.

Aesthetically the exhibition worked much better this year, partly because of the improved standard of entries, and partly because of the display itself. Lessons learned from last year helped streamline the arduous procedure of mounting the show. Michael Palmer provided purpose-built overhead lighting for the jewellery cases, and Arch Raymond patiently arranged each of the gallery's many track lights. Craftspace's showcases, recently purchased from the Crawford Gallery, made the task of arranging jewellery and small sculptural works much easier, and their tall narrow shape allowed them to be placed against the gallery display windows freeing more wall space. The arrangement of plinths for larger sculptural pieces was much more uniform, and the numbering and identification of pieces more discreet. The feature display of Joseph Pinter's impressive sculptural works, backed by dazzling enamel paintings by Tibor and Kamilla Szakos ensured that visitors' attention was caught immediately.

Around 140 pieces by 20 enamellers were selected for exhibition by the 3-person jury. The Szakos' again provided a fine body of work in solid wooden frames, sometimes arched or pointed, which complement their vivid colours and use of icons as motifs. Kamilla Szakos shows exquisite control in her representation of skin tones in some of her portraits.

Jozsef Pinter's huge patinated and enamelled copper works including his 'Space Station' sculpture, a platter encircled with enamelled discs and his classical vases provided an ideal centrepiece for the show.

Jenny Gore's diamond-shaped wall-pieces and other works are inspired by the natural beauty of the Onkaparinga estuary where she lives. Plique-a-jour table sculptures by Sandra Kerr added an extra dimension to the work in the jewellery cases.

Elaine Palmer's wall sculptures of bright reef fish became the centrepiece for the back half of the show, providing a foil for Mary Raymond's brooding works of creased and folded copper mounted on slate.

Carolyn Delzoppo's use of silver cloisonne wire to translate her linear drawings and her subtle use of transparent enamel colours work superbly in her impeccable cloisonne miniatures and triptychs, which drew many admiring comments.

Roger Hopkins exhibited beaten copper masks with cloisonne detail mounted on weathered timber and slate that showed mystical influence and his love of visual and verbal ambiguity in their appearance and titles.

Barbara Ryman's etched and enamelled designs tumble off the edge of brightly polished silver brooches or glow more seductively from the matte-finished surface of a spoon handle. Jillian Parnell's patinated copper boxes with matte-finished domed cloisonne lids provided a focal point amongst her enamelled jewellery. Jewellery by Marion Smith incorporated torn pieces of gold foil and strong colour in her bold designs which contrasted well against Catherine Large's cool enamel palette.

In creating the guidelines for this year's exhibition, a challenge was set to make the 3rd National a showcase for the best, the most innovative and individual enamelling works in Australia. The participants rose to meet that challenge, and work displayed this year largely reflected this. The improvement in the quality of the entries and the professionalism of the display was immense, and provided a strong, interesting and cohesive exhibition. With these ideals in mind, it's onwards and upwards to the next exhibition!

Wendy Hall

CRAFTSPACE
88 George St, The Rocks, Sydney
5th - 16th January 1994, 10am - 6.30pm daily

Enamel - The /



on copper *Madonna and Child* by Tibor Szakos.

Enamel: bea

After a tarnished image, the art of enamelling is regaining its lustre with a Sydney exhibition, writes **ANABEL DEAN**.

ENAMEL work is an art form with an image problem, still conjuring an aura of chintzy earrings and ugly commercial crockery. "Talk to Fabergé about that!" scoffs enamelist Roger Hopkins, referring to the exquisite enamelled Easter eggs that delighted royalty throughout 19th-century Europe.

"From earliest times, enamel was very much an aristocratic affair... but then it went through a bad stage. There was a great upsurge of interest [in Australia] in the 1960s, and every second house on the North Shore was getting into it.

"People could buy a ready-spun bowl and the enamelling glass, put it in a little kiln and some very beautiful things would come out, but it established a reputation of relying on happy accidents. Like a lot of fads it eventually died and went away."

Enamel: The Art of Fire, an exhibi-

tion opening tomorrow at the Craft-space Gallery in The Rocks, hopes to put these judgments to rest. It aims to promote an awareness and understanding of this ancient craft and reveal the immense versatility of the medium.

Some of the pieces are reminiscent of Renaissance- and Byzantine-style enamel paintings and icons. Some highlight the intricate cloisonné panels (cells created with wires and then filled with bright colour), while others stand as rugged wall panels and free-standing sculptures, decorator objects and designer jewellery.

The work crosses all technical bounds and was judged by experts before being included in the exhibition. Three of the 20 exhibitors have had their work accepted for the Limoges enamel exhibition in France this year.

Enamel is glass bonded by fusion onto a metal surface. Although normally transparent, various amounts of opacity are produced by adding or growing crystals within the glass structure, and the wide range of colours is achieved by incorporating certain metals.

"The beauty of enamel is that it doesn't fade," explains the exhibit co-ordinator, Mary Raymond, an enameller of more than 20 years. "You can put it outside and it's weatherproof because it's glass.

"We're trying to put really good

...ating in 1994:

...Clarke

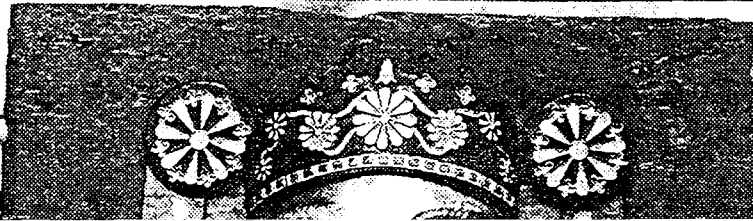


Art Of Fire -

The Sydney Morning Herald

Tuesday, January 4, 1994

Beauty that never fades



taken back to Japan, France, Britain, the United States and Hong Kong

"We were showing our visitors the best of what's being done in enamel in this country," says Mrs Raymond. "What a great way to achieve an appreciation and understanding of enamel as an art form, to create an interested clientele who will help us to