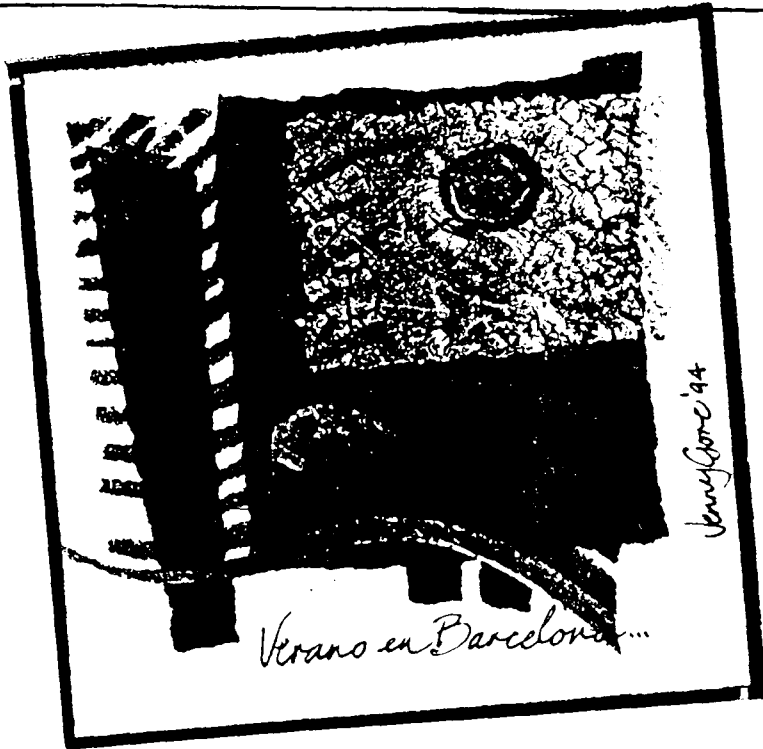


Australian Enamel Newsletter

Issue 36

February 1996



Enameller profile - Jenny Gore

I have been enamelling now for nearly 23 years. It is a medium which still offers challenge, excitement, opportunities for travel and meeting like-minded people.

For me it best describes the imagery I wish to create, and forces me to look at this imagery from a new perspective, given the technical limitations imposed by the means of applying the enamel and the number of firings required.

Over the years my work has been a reflection of my personal journey - from mainly external influences, my environment, travel etc, to a more recent interest in internal musings, my dreams etc.

Early exhibitions were inspired by all things connected with the sea, rock forms, aerial views, places I have travelled, flowers and birds. Happening concurrently were the 'bread and butter' pieces, mainly my collection of 20 different Australian wildflower plates - hundreds of them! These were sold in craft galleries and used as gifts by the Prime Minister's Dept and the SA Premiers Dept, until I could face them no longer!

For the last several years my more surreal dream pieces, with their Jungian interpretation, have been a major preoccupation. This has led me to a more free approach - learning to be more intuitive with the imagery, and scaling down the size - learning that 'less is more' and 'small is beautiful'. Once I would design every piece in my head, then on paper. A working drawing followed, and the cutting of hundreds of stencils before I even touched the copper. The pieces were quite large, maximum size for my largest kiln is 420x420mm and often made up

of several units.

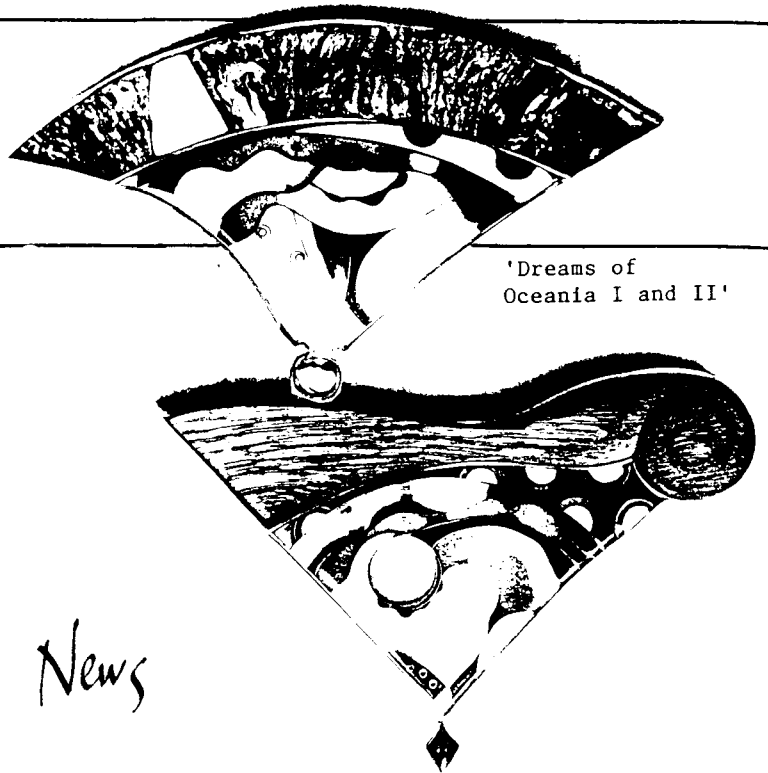
After the first flush of excitement from the initial firings, followed a long arduous, methodical building up of layers - until, about 30 firings later, the relief and occasionally, the joy of a finished piece.

Now I am trying to allow my unconscious to do the design work - laying on colours and shapes, then trying to discover what they wish to tell me! This usually takes time - a wonderful feeling if the piece shrieks out its message - or a daily communication with it - wondering if it is destined for the scrap heap!

Being mainly self-taught, with just a few lessons and a couple of workshops (Vivienne Binns and Ian Were) along the way, I have experimented my way through most techniques and materials by reading every book I could find on the subject. The advantage was that no-one could tell me what is 'not possible' and what shouldn't be done! Although working in isolation has its drawbacks and was often the long way around, I discovered different ways of working (often influenced by my background in graphic art) and some of these have become quite individual to me.

I enjoy using the grisaille technique, liquid enamel, dusting with stencils, opal, opaque and transparent enamels for the mainly abstract imagery, then fine gold and silver foils with wet inlay and gold leaf for the more figurative details, oxide for writing, always using copper as a base. In the early years I made many bowls, cylinders and plates as well as wall panels, but now I concentrate on on the latter.

Continued back cover



'Dreams of Oceania I and II'

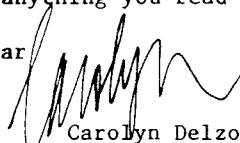
As I compile this issue, we're experiencing a heat wave here. Summer had seemed mild and bearable until now. It's far too hot to have a kiln raging in the workshop, and anyway perspiration and enamel aren't compatible. Drip, drip, drip....

Subscribers to AEN will have received a letter from Mary Raymond, convenor of the National Exhibition of Enamels. She's appealing for responses from you about the exhibition. Do you want it to continue? Will you support it by sending work? The future of this exhibition is being decided soon, and depends on responses from enamellers from all over Australia. No responses....no show.

There have been several very successful exhibitions in recent years and I feel that enamel in Australia has never been stronger. It would be a shame if we cannot sustain our momentum and keep this yearly survey of our art happening. Please let Mary know your thoughts on the subject.

AEN exchanges newsletters with many guilds and enamel groups in Europe, America, England and South Africa. This issue contains several interesting articles gleaned from these publications. Most newsletters have only a small readership and I feel it is worthwhile to help bring the experience and views of enamellers to a wider audience. Newsletters elsewhere also reprint items of interest from AEN, thus completing the circle. Everybody gains by such sharing. AEN welcomes your views on anything you read here.

All the best for the New Year


Carolyn Delzoppo
Editor

The deadline for material for the next issue will be March 23 or thereabouts. Articles, information, comments on anything you read in here are very welcome, and can be faxed or posted to the editor, Carolyn Delzoppo, PO Box 418, Mullumbimby NSW 2482. Fax 066 841 772.

Thank you -

Thank you to the following contributors to this issue:

Jenny Gore, Asako Fuller, Mary Raymond, Edmund Masow, Barbara Ryman, Catherine Large, Anna Margot Collins, Audrey Komrad and Donne Buchwald, Marilyn Druin, Sandie Bradshaw, Allan Heywood, Phyllis Wallen, Cynthia Weir, and Pat Johnson.

Cover

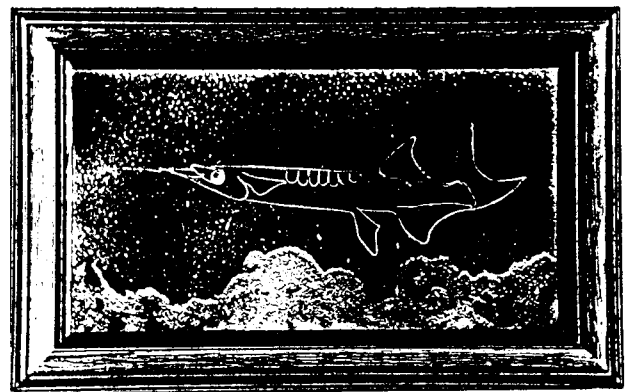
Jenny Gore can be contacted at
61 Commercial Rd, Port Noarlunga Sth, SA

News

Congratulations again to Barbara Ryman! Her cloisonné brooches 'Dreams of Oceania I and II' have been given The Award of the Syosenkyo Rope-Way Shippo Museum at the 9th Cloisonné Jewellery Contest in Tokyo Japan. Barbara also won an award there in 1994. Good going Barbara!

The Babs Bannenburg workshops planned for March in Sydney have had to be cancelled. The ill-health of Bab's husband Carl has prevented Babs from travelling.

Chris Heywood won first prize (\$150) in the Under 21 section of the Sipton Art Show 1995 with his first serious cloisonné enamel piece. Chris's picture shows a garfish, which he had caught and frozen. The panel is 200mm x 100mm. Chris is 8 years old, and has spent his prize money on a boat. Well done Chris!



Jenny Gore, Catherine Large, Sandra Kerr, Allan Heywood, Barbara Ryman and Carolyn Delzoppo had work accepted into the 1995 Enamel Art in Japan Exhibition that took place in September. Barbara Ryman's brooches won an Award for Artistic Work, and Carolyn Delzoppo was a guest artist.

Change of address

Wendy Hall 5 Edna Street, Lilyfield 2040 NSW

Barbara Ryman 71 George Street, Thirroul 2515 NSW

Julie Carter

7/2B Loyola Ave, Brunswick East, Victoria

Opportunities to Exhibit

Expressions in Glass

Feature exhibition of the 1st Australian Enamel Symposium opening Thursday 26th September for 3 weeks. Open to all enamellers. \$25.00 entry fee. Entry details are not yet final, but be prepared to be involved!

Alice Craft Acquisition

Early warning. Closing date for entries, 8 May. Almost \$5000 available for acquisitions. Entry forms available from: Crafts Council of NT
PO Box 85, Alice Springs NT 0871
Ph 089 524 417

9th International Exhibition of Enamelling Art in Japan

Hankyu Community Gallery, Ginza, Tokyo. Artists should submit 2 slides each of up to 3 works, accompanied by a copy of the registration form, to arrive no later than the end of April 1996. There is an entry fee of US\$50.00. Selection will be by jury assessment. AEN has entry details and forms, send stamped self addressed envelope and 2 x 45c stamps to cover photocopy costs, or contact the organisers: The Steering committee, Secretariats of International Exhibition of Enamel Art in Japan, C/- Musashino Art and craft laboritory 4-5-7, Sakai, Musashino-shi, Tokyo 180 Japan.

International Events

'Fahrenheit 96: Solid, Liquid, Solid'

An international fire arts conference. The Pacific Enamel Symposium is now Fahrenheit 96. Lectures, workshops, panel discussions, demonstrations and more. August 23 - 27 1996
Bellevue Community College. Bellevue. Washington State, US
Phone US 206 641 2266 for more information.

International Enamel Art Workshop in Kecskemet, Hungary.

Every year enamellists from all over the world work together in Kecskemet for several weeks. Good workshop with the possibility to work in many techniques. For more information write to Alkotomuhely Zomancmuv ezeti
Bethlen Krt 16, H6000, Kecskemet, Hungary.

In October 1995 an enamel festival was held in Morez France near the Swiss border. During the festival the whole village was decorated with enamels and nine different exhibitions were held. It is planned to make the next festival in October 1996, possibly in Achern, a neighbouring village of Morez.

For more information contact:
G.I.R.A.E.F.E. Marie Therese Masias,
2 Chemin du Tir, F-39400 Morez, France.
If possible write in French.

Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts will offer a workshop March 11-15 1996 in Die Forming and Enamelling. It will focus on an exploration of the creative aspects of forming metal with a hydrolic press in combination with the use of enamels on a three dimensional form. Tutors: Susan Kingsley and Carol Holaday. For more information write to
Arrowmont School of Arts and Crafts
PO Box 567, 556 Parkway Gatlinburg, Tennessee US
Phone 614 436 5860

Two Enamel workshops are being held as part of the West Dean College Summer School August 3-16 1996. Aug 3-9 Enamelling techniques in jewellery making and small work on silver and copper.

Tutor Joan McKarell

Aug 10-16 Enamel on copper and steel

Tutor Pat Johnson

AEN has details of the courses and booking forms or more information can be obtained from the College at WestDean, Chichester, West Sussex PO180QZ UK
Phone 01243 811301 Fax 01243 811343

The Enamelist Society - 1997 Conference

Dates have been set for the 1997 Biennial Enamelist Society Conference to be held at Arrowmont School of Arts in Gatlinburg, Tennessee, in the Smokey Mountains. Pre-conference workshops will be held October 13-15 1997, the conference will take place October 17,18,19, and the post-conference workshops 20-22nd October 1997. More details as they are released.

Wanted to buy

Carolyn Delzoppo is appealing for quantity (large and small) of Schauer Medium Opaque White No 301. This enamel has been discontinued by Schauer. Will buy and pay postage costs, or swap for same quantity of your favourite enamel if possible. Please send enamel (with swap preferences) to:
PO Box 418, Mullumbimby NSW 2482
Phone or fax 066 841 772.

Supplies

New products from Thompson Enamels:

Carefree Lustres in Solid Color Decal Sheets.

Solid colours of carefree Lustres have been applied to decal paper using the screening technique described in Glass on Metal magazine in June 1995. Can be used on any vitreous surface. Cut out a design, place into water for a few seconds, position onto a fired enamel surface, squeegee, dry and fire. Seven colours available.

Diamond Cloth

Flexible diamond cloth abrasive, for stoning or abrading enamel or other surfaces. Use wet or dry. Supplied with adhesive back so can be bonded to any support shape. 1" x 4" strips, 200, 400, 800 and 1800 mesh.

Thompson Enamel, PO Box 310, Newport KY 41072 US
Ph 606 291 3800, Fax 606 291 1849

'The Escarpment' Mural

1.5 x 6 metres



THE ESCARPMENT

Did I say the next one will be a piece of cake? Wrong!!! They say that pride comes before a fall and I wished I'd never written those words.

About a month after the installation of the 'Terra Australis' mural I was offered the opportunity to create a mural for the entrance foyer of a new private hospital to be opened late last year. The wall on which it would hang was 8 metres wide and curved! Having thought that the hanging problems were solved with the mural we now had to rethink. Once again my wonderful husband worked it all out for me. The curvature of the wall meant that the frame had to have enough flexibility to fit the curve and yet enough strength to support the total weight of the mural (200kg). The other problem was one of accuracy. The mural was made up of tiles 30cm x 30cm, 20 across and 5 down. This meant that

a 1mm error at one end, if compounded could finish up as a 20mm error at the other end and this would be totally unacceptable. I once again worked in strips of 5 tiles, vertical strips this time. Again I created the design lines with stencils, adding colour and texture later. The changes in appearance from one firing to the next were so exciting that once again I finished the firing more quickly than I had anticipated, but of course putting in long hard days which were very rewarding. At every stage I had to check for accuracy and finally when we laid it out on the rumpus room floor it all joined up beautifully. However, with such a large work, even the slightest unevenness of the wall made problem when it was hung. It took half a day to install the frame on the wall, and the following week it took us two days to hang the 20 panels adjusting as we went. What a challenge from start to finish!

Mary Raymond

From the Magazines

The December 1995 Issue of NAVA (National Association for the Visual Arts) Newsletter is a special edition dealing with Copyright for Visual Artists. The issue is full of information of value to designers. NAVA can be contacted at:
PO Box 60, Potts Point NSW 2011.
Telephone 02 368 1900

The May 1995 issue of Lapidary Journal contains an article on gem carver Lew Wadder, which contains an explanation of his machine for Guilloche engraving. Guilloche is a method of machine engraving metal objects before they were enamelled, and was used extensively by Faberge and many other jewellers historically.

Review of Glass on Metal

This review is reprinted from the January 1996 issue of the newsletter of the Northern California Enamel Guild.

The December 'Glass on Metal' was a very exciting issue. There was an article by Margaret Seeler in which she briefly presented some of the topics she plans to cover in her forth coming book- Enamel: Medium for Fine Art. Ordering information is promised soon. She gave a good breakdown on proportions in figure drawing and the use of stick

figures to visualise different poses, as well as some methods for achieving three-dimensional forms. The keynote address of James Doran to the Enamelist Society last summer was printed - a philosophical treatise on why so few artists have historically chosen enamelling as their medium. There are reviews of Fay Rooke's plique-a-jour workshop, articles on Karl Drerup (San Diego), Katalin Sz. Varga (Romania), and Eugenio Luna (Mexico). I especially liked the article on Luna because, like myself, he was a traditional painter before and while being an enamelist. He neither washes his enamels or worries about firescale. He incorporates the imperfections into his work. Now, how do you get hold of this exciting publication? You join the Enamelist Society by sending \$45 (Editors note - It costs more from here) with your name and address to:

The Enamellist Society
PO Box 631704, Cincinnati, OH 45263-1704
Note, this is a new address.

Mastercard and Visa are accepted. The new Glass on Metal publishing months will be February, April, August, October and December for 1996. There will also be two newsletters with such information as current guild news, enamel questions and answers, and exhibitions of interest to enter or visit. So join up now.

Sandie Bradshaw
The subscription rate for Australia is US\$62.60 per year. The magazine is highly recommended.

AUSTRALIAN ENAMEL SYMPOSIUM

International visitor

Fred Rich, a British enameller, was holidaying in Australia over Christmas and the New Year. A few of us managed to meet up with him for some lunch and enjoyed seeing his folder of photos of work from his latest exhibition as well as some older pieces. His recent works, exhibited at Garrards of London, are vases, dishes, goblets, and candle snuffers. They are large works with themes of chameleons, butterflies, praying mantis, fish and other natural motifs. The metal is heavily engraved to provide lots of texture and zinging colours and the creatures are delineated by cloisonne wire. They are truly wondrous works and Fred's show was a sellout with so many orders that no doubt, once back home he wont be seen for ages. His work sells for fabulous prices and its wonderful to see an enameller so well rewarded for his talent and skill. It was amusing to hear him talk of disasters, 'things that always worked then decided not to when it was vital', enamel supply problems, cracks, bubbles, galleries who understand that enamel is time consuming and painstaking and unpredictable... 'but can we have three more by next week?'. GRRRR! An enamellers lot is not a happy one. We hope next time Fred's in Oz he'll have more time and we can get a big slide show and talk going. Thanks Fred and many happy firings in the future.

Barbara Ryman

In Memoriam

I am saddened to read today of the death in early January of Margaret Seeler. I feel that I have lost a friend even though I never met her. Her book, 'The Art of Enamelling' is the one to which I turn first when having problems with my enamels. More often than not there will be something there to help. I have always admired her for her 'can-do' attitude to enamel, and for her dedication and generosity in making her knowledge so widely available. 'Glass on Metal' readers have had the benefit of her informative articles over the years, the most recent in the current issue.

In the introduction to 'The Art of Enamelling' Margaret wrote:
"To me, art is a language beyond time, space and nationality. It can be understood by those whom we may never meet. Sincerity, honest work, and self-restraint will go much further than short cuts and all the tools money can buy. Even a beginner is able to work well and in good taste with a few basic tools, and every step will carry with it the joy of achievement.
And now let's get to work....."

Carolyn Delzoppo

Australian Enamel Symposium 1996
September 26 - 29
Brisbane, Queensland.

This is the 1st Biennial Australian Enamel Symposium. It aims to bring together a large group of enamellers from all over Australia and the world, for four days of technical information and social interaction.

The symposium is being held at Somerville House, a private girls school near Southbank overlooking Brisbane. The programme will include keynote address by Tom Ellis from Thompson Enamels in the US, slide shows by various artists, hands-on display of techniques and products, dealer displays, talks on other enamel related topics and a show-and-tell evening.

Before and after the symposium there will be workshops, featuring Tom Ellis from Thompson Enamels and Jenny Gore, internationally known Australian enameller. There will also be a feature exhibition titled 'Expressions in Glass' which will be open to all enamellers.

Workshops

Tom Ellis will be conducting two workshops -

1/ Experimental Approaches to Painting Enamel.
3 days duration. Traditional painting applications, mixing of colours, experimental techniques, sgraffito and transparent overcoats. Steel tiles of various sizes will be used, suitable for framing.

2/ Traditional Champleve Techniques
2 days duration. Lead-free enamels applied directly to copper and multi-layered etches will be shown.

Jenny Gore's workshop will be 5 days duration and is titled 'Taking a Risk!'.
Risk - allowing your intuition to do the designing.
Risk - playing with colours and shapes, mixing enamels and techniques to develop new imagery... straight from the unconscious.
Using dusting with torn stencils, sgreffito, fine gold and silver foils, wet inlay, oxides, carefree lustres and gold leaf to develop the story which emerges.....be surprised, maybe learn something about yourself.

You will make 2 or 3 pieces of 100 x 100mm, plus some smaller test pieces for your new colour repertoire.
For any level of expertise...a workshop for fun...
12 places available only.

Details of the Seminar and registration details are available from the convenors:

Anna Margot Originals
GPO Box 1850, Brisbane, Queensland 4001.
Ph 07 3367 3266 Fax 07 3367 3277



Lustres

Definition of Lustre

Lustre is a form of overglaze decoration in which a thin metallic film is developed on the surface of the glaze or enamel.

Type of Lustre

1/ Oxidation Lustre

Lustre achieved in an oxidising fire with the aid of reducing agents.

2/ Reduction Lustre

Lustre is produced in a reduced atmosphere. Raku lustre is the most popular reduction lustre. Raku enamelling is an experimental technique borrowed from ceramic art.

Oxidation Lustre

Two methods.

1/ Kiln Firing

Apply liquid metals such as liquid gold, platinum, palladium (silver), mother of pearl, on to prefired enamel surface and fire again in kiln.

2/ Torch Firing

Torch firing lustre is particularly appropriate to expecting 'chance happenings' but with more control than in Raku firing lustre. Although a certain amount of control is exercised, in the final analysis, the results are due to elements and conditions without a precise control. Lead-free enamels, lead-bearing enamels, all different colours, on copper or on steel - all of these elements react in different ways.

Two Torch Firing Techniques

Technique 1

Torch firing on thin foil

Torch firing soft white (Thompson 644 opaque) on the

thin foil produces the most startling rainbow hues - pinks, greens, blues, and purple golds. These changes, determined by the varying amount of heat reaching the enamel, are difficult to predict or control.

a/ Sift a thin coat of soft white on the copper foil (no counter enamel).

b/ Place the copper foil with enamel on a torching stand or raised trivet so that it can be heated from underneath.

c/ Apply the torch to produce an intense heat under one area of the foil with enamel, then hold the torch farther below the surface to produce white accents and pale blues. The colour will intensify with cooling. To produce brighter lustres, pass torch flame over enamel.

d/ If colouration is not satisfactory, torch the piece again and add more soft white and continue torching. If colouration does not change, the coat of soft white may be too thick.

Technique 2

Iridescence

Iridescence can be produced by passing a torch over the face of fired enamels. For best results, the work is done immediately after the piece is taken out of the kiln and is red hot.

a/ A portable propane torch or a "Blazer" micro butane gas torch works well for most torch lustres, and are not as hazardous as acetylene. Have torch ready.

b/ Remove fired enamel from kiln and immediately place on prepared torch stand, fire brick or other fire proof surface.

c/ Immediately pass flame of torch over enamelled surface until iridescence is achieved. Try passing torch over black, red, blues, greens and turquoises. Leaded Thompson enamels Midnight Blue and Tyrolian green, plus lead-free Flame red achieve the best iridescence after they have been fired and torched.

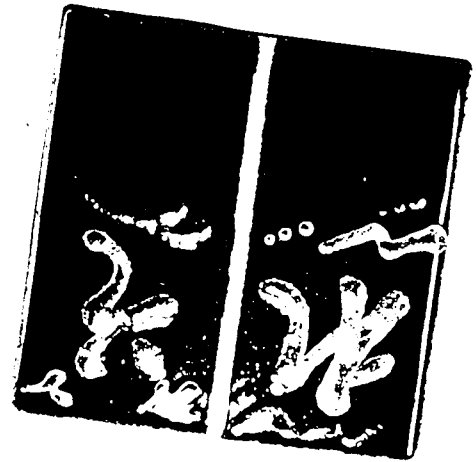
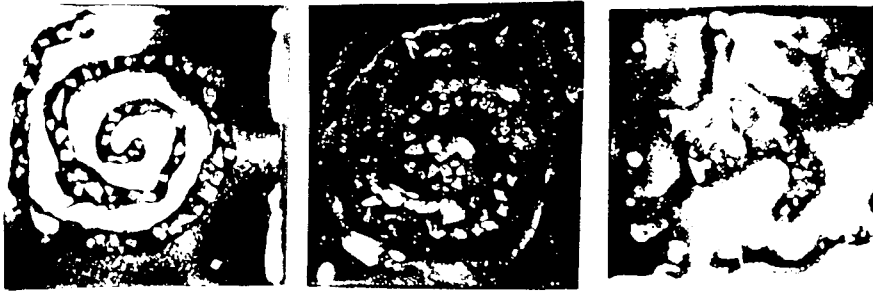
d/ The delicate gold, silver, and rainbow lustres emerge as the heat is held close and pulled away, back and forth.

e/ Try on 20 gauge (Editors note US gauges are different to Aust) or thinner copper or steel.

f/ If the first torch lustre is not as you wish it to be, re-fire the piece briefly in the kiln and repeat the torch procedure to bring out another lustre surface.

g/ Torch lustre may be used after a raku firing to increase lustred effects in special areas.

h/ Torch lustre will survive mild acid baths quite well, but test small areas first.



Chemical Lustre

Shimmering lustres may be heightened by the addition of chemicals, before firing, most effectively on dark backgrounds.

Some chemicals involve very toxic reactions, such as silver nitrate, gold chloride, tin chloride and copper nitrate. Silver nitrate is a toxic chemical but it induces the most brilliant iridescences - delicate gold, silver and rainbow lustres. Recommended safe lustres are copper carbonate or cobalt carbonate. These chemicals also induce elegant iridescence to the enamel surface.

Formulas for chemical solutions are as follows. Read the section on precautions before using any of these formulas.

533 Liquid White	48 tsp	48
Silver nitrate	1 tsp	1 ratio
Milder formula		
533 Liquid White	24 tsp	24
Silver nitrate	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp	1 ratio

Also you can mix with 772 Liquid Black or any coloured Liquid 'Crackle' enamel for an experiment. As silver nitrate is a powerful chemical, a lesser amount is used.

533 Liquid White	15 tsp	30
Copper Carbonate	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp	1 ratio
Cobalt Carbonate	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp	

Let the solution mix well with water. Stir with a plastic spoon or wooden stick. Let the solution stand 24 - 48 hours before use.

The chemical solution can be applied with an inexpensive brush, wooden or bamboo stick to a prefired surface of opaque or transparent enamel. Try pouring the solution and rolling it to the edges for an even coat or thick and thin apply. In this way you can create a wonderful design.

Precautions

- 1/ Wash well all brushes after each use, especially when handling a toxic chemical.
- 2/ Do not spray any chemical solution at any time. Chemicals can cause severe illness if ingested or inhaled.
- 3/ Do not smoke, eat or drink while using chemicals.
- 4/ Wash hands thoroughly after working with chemicals. Always use protective vinyl or rubber gloves.
- 5/ Avoid inhaling the dust or fumes. Wear a protective mask and protect yourself.

Best Lustre Enamels

The most brilliant lustre producing Thompson enamels are:

Lead-bearing enamels:

426 tr Soft Flux:	dark gold lustre
657 tr Tyrolian Green:	rainbow lustre
389 tr Midnight Blue:	dark gold lustre
659 tr Turquoise:	gold, silver, rainbow
604 tr Copen Blue:	gold, silver, rainbow
938 op Peacock Tq:	gold, silver, rainbow
175 op Flame Red:	silver lustre
124 op Black:	silver lustre

Lead-free enamels

2530 tr Water Blue:	gold, silver, rainbow
2435 tr Turquoise:	gold, silver, rainbow
1465 op Peacock:	gold, silver, rainbow
1390 op Alpine Green:	gold, silver, rainbow
1685 op Cobalt Blue:	gold, silver, rainbow
1880 op Flame Red:	elegant rainbow lustre

References

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Enamels, Enameling, Enamelists
Radnor, Pennsylvania:
Chilton Book Company 1984

Ball, Fred
Experimental Techniques in Enamelling
new York, N.Y.:
Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1972

Editors Note -

These are the notes that accompanied a demonstration that Asako Fuller gave at the Enamelist Society Conference in the US in 1995. Asako has sent them to AEN for publication along with a series of colour photographs and notes.

Anyone interested in these experiments can borrow the photographs from AEN. Please send stamped business size envelope with your request. If there is a rush you may have to wait your turn. First come.....

Issues 31 and 32 of AEN contained a two-part article by Asako Fuller titled 'Torch Lustre and Raku Workshop'. Asako's colour photographs and notes from this article are also available.

AEN thanks Asako for her generosity in making these available.

From the newsletters —

This article is reprinted from the newsletter of the US National Enamelist Guild December 1995 issue.

Enamelling on Sterling Silver

This summer I participated in a workshop given by English enameller Phil Barnes. He and many British enamellers use sterling silver not fine silver as a base. The following describes his method of preparing the metal.

- 1/ Place the finished piece into 70% (technical grade) nitric acid. (I would protect my joints with resist). All firescale will turn black, even though pickled.
- 2/ Add a few drops of hot water. Nitric acid does not react as sulphuric does when water is added. Agitate back and forth until the piece turns white. Discard the acid.
- 3/ Immerse the piece in 70% nitric acid. The silver will remain bright. Save this acid.
- 4/ Remove the piece and rinse well in tap water.
- 5/ Scrub with detergent and a brass brush.
- 6/ For cast work, beads or convoluted pieces, boil in water and soda bicarbonate and rinse well.

Do not use this method for fine silver. If fine silver is treated by mistake, it will blacken. Pickle to clean. There is a wealth of information regarding enamelling on various metals in Glass on Metal Vol 5 No 6 Dec 1986. The following information has been abstracted from that issue.

Sterling contains 92.5% silver and 7.5% copper but alloys with as little as 92.1% silver can be stamped 'sterling' in the US. The melting point of fine silver is 1760.9 degrees F and copper 1981.4 degrees F. The solidus temperature defines a temperature below which the metal is a solid and above which the metal is a liquid. The solidus temperature for sterling is about 1470 degrees F so it is better to fire at 1400-1450 degrees F. Thompson has found that enamels with expansion coefficients of 290 or more can be fired many times at a firing temperature of 1400-1450 degrees F on sterling without discolouring or cracking. They attribute those problems to one or more of the following:

- 1/ Enamels applied with expansion coefficients which were too low for sterling.
- 2/ Applying a high expansion enamel over a low expansion enamel.
- 3/ Firing too hot for sterling. No higher than 1400F is desirable. (1450 at the most).
- 4/ Using sterling with absorbed oxygen. This allows the oxygen to escape to the surface of the metal and become entrapped at the metal/enamel interface causing metal oxidation and discolouration under a transparent enamel. Apparently the gas content, in particular oxygen, is not specified in the production of fine or sterling silver.

My experience was limited and I consider this only a probe into the possibilities.

I took a piece of 16 gauge sterling silver and applied asphaltum resist. I etched the exposed metal in a 20% nitric acid solution (one part technical strength nitric acid in four parts of water). I removed the resist and immersed the piece in technical strength nitric acid with a

few drops of hot water and observed the colour change from black to pale grey. I rinsed, scrubbed the piece and immersed it in new technical strength acid and it did not darken.

I wet packed Thompson LF Nitric Blue 2660, expansion 299 and Nitric Blue 2625 expansion 307 with excellent results. There were no subsequent firings. I also took 26 gauge sterling discs for earrings and I had to repeat the process five times until the metal did not darken in technical strength nitric acid. I applied Nitric Blue enamel and fired the piece, added silver foil and fired a total of five times without experiencing cracking or discolouration. Thompsons Glass Green 2340 expansion 315 also works well.

Thompson Enamel Catalogue No 886 has a chart giving the physical properties, expansion coefficients of their lead-free enamels.

Editors note - if any enamellers are unable to find a copy of this chart, AEN can photocopy it for you. Send stamped addressed envelope with request. AEN suggests any enamellers unfamiliar with working with acids refer to an article 'Acids - use and safety in the workshop' that was printed in the February 1994 issue of AEN. Copies are available on request. Send the usual envelope and 2x45c stamps to cover photocopy costs.

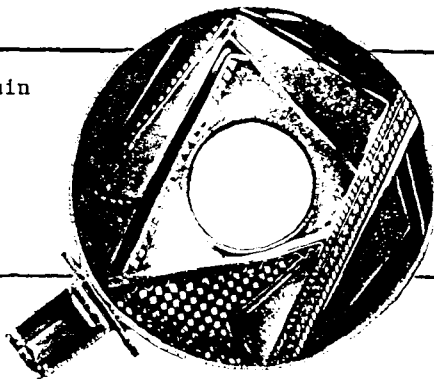
This article by Phyllis Wallen is reprinted from the San Diego Enamel Guild Newsletter.

What if enamel shows were reviewed for the press by the kind of people who critique movies, the stage, concerts and sports? These writers are known for sparing no ones feelings. They can give high praise - even raves - to performances they like, but can be equally negative about the things they don't approve of. They are often witty, insightful and derisive.

As you know, a theatre critic can close down a play with a few merciless remarks, a production which may have cost millions and effects the lives and careers of many people involved. Who are these so-called 'critics' who have such awesome power? Are they really super beings with highly trained expertise? Not often. They are more likely to be just clever writers who are paid to fill a column that will attract readership.

Art show critics are a different breed. They tend to be more scholarly and analytical. They seldom seek out the weak spots for disparagement. They seem to treat art as a sacrosanct realm, even though, as Morley Safer has pointed out, some contemporary art is 'Fraudulent junk'.

Critics of enamel shows avoid making judgements of good and bad, strong and weak, - they prefer to discuss techniques and directions. After all, remember the famous quote from Will Rogers: "If a man says he is an artist, there aint nobody who can say he aint."



This article by Marilyn Druin is reprinted from the newsletter of Enamel Guild North East. Marilyn is President of the Guild.

Cosmic Consciousness, Inspired by, Derivative, or Rip Off???

The last piece I completed before leaving for the Philadelphia Art Museum Craft Show was a goblet in shades of golds, browns and black enamel. It was one of those pieces which represented a coming together of a long period of experimentation in diverse areas. The beginning inspiration for my work with shadings of gold and metallic oxides was a workshop on the reticulation of foils taught by Bill Helwig five years ago at the Enamelist Society Conference. Over time, in order to create this latest in a line of experimental pieces, I'd added etched and roller printed surfaces inspired by woven fabric designs, deep layering of foils inspired by Klimt's and Olga de Amaral golds, cloisonne and filigree wires, and some controlled crackling of enamels. A circular brooch displayed last August in the Enamelist Society's Juried Exhibition served as a sampler for the enamel on the current goblet. I had been sketching goblet forms since a trip to London eight years ago. The goblet format would probably still be just sketches had it not been for the technical help from Harlan Butt, Milton Naham, and Valeri Timofeev. After this long and difficult birth, I was quite pleased with the direction this latest piece had taken. Accordingly, at the show I prominently displayed and lighted the goblet. Within the opening hour of the show an enamelist who I consider to be very gifted, came by, admired the piece, and commented on how I had been inspired by seeing her work the previous spring.

I did some deep soul searching to define the sources of my inspiration. Where do concepts come from? Is there anything new? I created a group of circular donut pieces a few years ago, then panicked because I realised that another jeweller had been using the form before I was. The circle was really the best shape for the enamel I was doing, but I was going to give up using the shape, when Isabella Corwin was kind and perceptive enough to send me a drawing of some cavemen. Guess what? They were also using the other jewellers circular donut form. None of us exists in a vacuum. We all have many of the same historical references. Perhaps the real question is not what inspired you, but where did you move from the inspiration point or points. Have you made the concept your own? When you see an enamel, can you immediately say, "That is a Margaret Seeler piece"? Or, when you look at the signature do you see that it is a Margaret Seeler look-alike signed by someone who has been nothing more than derivative. I see this happening every time I open a current magazine. Sometimes I think that there may be some sort of cosmic consciousness out there and we all start to do the same thing at the same time. more likely

than not, it is a strong teacher or personality creating a new direction for exploration.

We must stay alert, because we all walk a very treacherous and narrow line between plagerism and inspiration.

I welcome your thoughts on this topic.

This article, author unknown, is reprinted from the September 1995 issue of the newsletter of Enamel Guild West, 'Vitreous Voice'.

Drawing on Enamel with Graphite and Underglaze Pencils

Graphite (regular art pencil) and ceramic underglaze pencils are used on a matte enamel surface. A matte surface is necessary because the roughness of the surface removes bits of the point of the pencil as it is dragged over the roughened enamel, much like the surface (tooth) of paper removes bits of pencil as it moves across a page.

A matte surface can be achieved by stoning with a carborundum stone, sandblasting, glass etch products application, or Thompson Matte white enamel No 1050.

If stoning with a carborundum stone, it is necessary to stone the entire area to be pencilled until it is flat and rough with no shiny spots. This is done under water or in a container that holds water and gives enough room to stone the enamel. The pencil will just slide over any shiny enamel spots since they don't have any tooth to remove bits of the pencil. To see if the surface is completely matte, run water over it and dry with a towel. Shiny spots will be apparant.

Two commercial etching creams have the brand names, Velvet Etch and Armor Etch. These can be obtained from stained glass supply sources. Apply cream with a soft brush to the area to be made matte. This should be done in a well ventilated space since these creams must be used with care and caution. Wait approximately 3 minutes and rinse the cream away. Use gloves when handling creams, and wash brush and keep only for use with etching creams. The surface should now be ready to receive ceramic or graphite pencil drawings.

Both graphite and underglaze ceramic pencils require a transparent overlay for permanance. Neither graphite nor ceramic pencils contain enamel. A clear flux for silver or Thompson Water Clear flux work well, as did the old Thompson 1209. Try the new leadfree fluxes, but remember to have lead-free enamel under them.

A white surface can be used as a base for drawing. A hard white such as Thompson old leaded 621-A or lead-free 1010 and 1020 work well. Other colours work well but they must be 'hard' not 'soft' enamels. The pencil lines have a tendency to sink into a soft enamel. For this reason, if subsequent layers of the pencil are to be used, the covering flux or transparent enamel should be 'hard', because it in turn becomes the surface for another layer of pencil.

Beautiful effects can be achieved by layering pencilled and fluxed surfaces over each other. A glowing surface full of depth and imagery can result from this technique.

More from the newsletters —

This article by Audrey Komrad and Donna Buchwald is reprinted from the December 1995 issue of the Enamel Guild South Newsletter.

Enamelling on Silver Pattern Sheet

We purchased a sampler sheet of 'fine silver pattern sheet' which consists of 16 photo etched designs, each 1½ inches square. The designs had clear, sharp definition. We cut these apart and worked with several different designs.

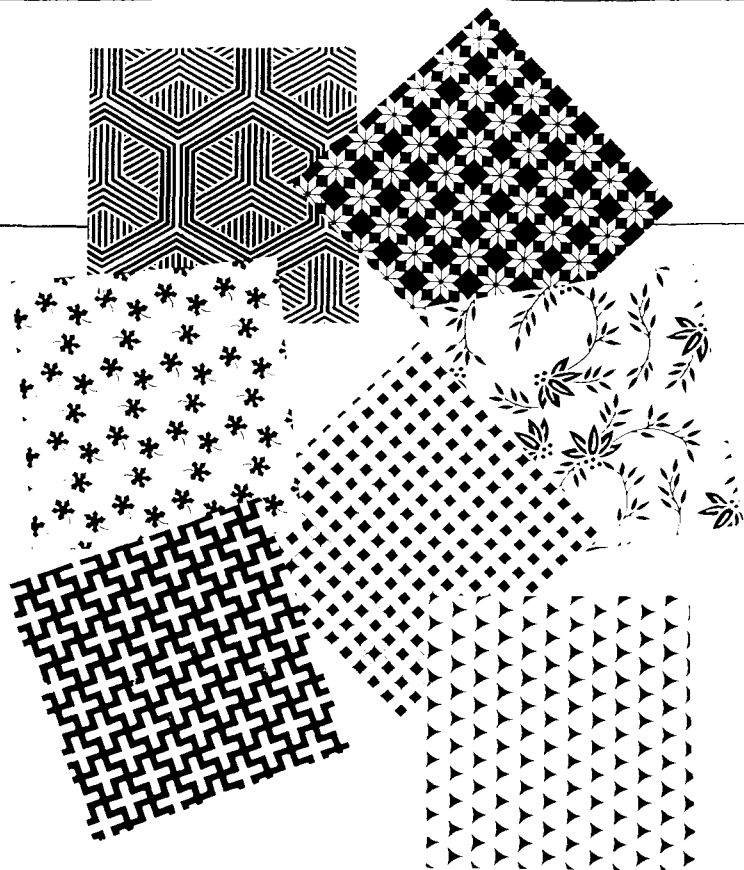
We chose a very light transparent enamel colour and sifted two very light coats, 80 mesh and fired to maturity. Though the enamel fired clear, the overall effect was dull, because, although the design could be seen through the transparent enamel, it had to be held in direct light. We then tried the same colour on another piece but this time sifted with 150 mesh. After firing, the design could be seen a little better. On the third piece, we did one light sifting of flux for silver, then a light sifting of the transparent enamel, 150 mesh. After firing, the design could be seen even better, though the effect was still not perfect.

We felt that the design had to be enhanced in some way to make it easier to see after enamel was applied. Using another square, we used some P3 Black Oxide (Thompson lead-free) and dipped a small wet sponge into the oxide powder and rubbed it over the pattern sheet and wiped away the excess. The black oxide sank into the design lines, leaving the surrounding silver clean. We then sifted the same 150 mesh light transparent enamel and fired the piece to maturity. The effect this time was better since the lines of the design were black and sharper and more clearly defined. However, by itself it was still not an exciting piece so we added some millifiori beads to spruce it up and it became much more interesting. Actually it is more interesting to cut these pattern sheet squares in different and more creative shapes and incorporate them into other designs and projects.

Since we were both in the mood to be creative, we started to think of how we could create our own 'pattern sheets', not photo etched of course, with our own individual designs.

And so we did, and the procedure is as follows:

- 1/ Using 22 or 24 ga (editors note- US gauge sizes are different to Australian) fine silver sheet, cut to desired shape and file edges smooth.
- 2/ Use emery paper, 320, 400, and 600 (use dry) to eliminate scratches on the silver.
- 3/ Clean the metal with white diamond and rouge till shiny and rinse with ammonia and water solution.
- 4/ Using an electric engraver or flexible shaft with a fine diamond tip, engrave a design in the silver. Press hard enough to make a deep enough design, but not so hard that you go through.
- 5/ The design lines can be darkened with either P3 Oxide Underglaze D or Fine Line Black Overglaze. Be sure to wipe away any excess with a soft cloth. Repeat two more times if necessary. You want to darken only the design lines, not the surrounding metal. Dry.



- 6/ The piece can now be domed if desired, and shined with a jewellery cloth.
- 7/ Sift a very light coat of flux for silver. If the metal is domed it can be lightly sprayed with Klyre-fire before sifting. One sifting is enough. Now do one sifting of a light transparent enamel (use a colour compatible with silver ie blues and greens), preferably 150 mesh to make the colour even lighter.
- 8/ Dry and fire to maturity.
- 9/ The back should be counter enamelled.
- 10/ The piece can be fired a few more times to complete the design and accents such as millifiori beads or gold foil etc can be added to enhance the design.

Silver Pattern Sheet can be purchased from David H. Fell & Co, 6009 Bandini Blvd, City of Commerce, California 90040, USA.

A catalogue of patterns is available, and the company will photo-etch sheets from your own artwork for an extra charge. Designs are also available in strips suitable for bracelets.

This workshop report is reprinted from the December 1995 issue of the US National Enamelist Guild newsletter.

Cloisonne on Steepsided Vessels with Jean Tudor

Having had my frustrations with cloisonne in the past, it was with a feeling of desperation that I decided to do Jean Tudor's workshop. So, armed with a deep-sided vessel (mine was the largest in the class) I arrived ready to complete a piece this time or give up.

Jean started with a showing of slides of her work, while she discussed briefly elements of design. Later she showed slides of pieces that were accepted for the 1995 Enamelists Society Convention. We were then shown examples of her work, both the successes and some problems and a piece that was in progress.

Response -

Before starting the project we covered the bowls inside and out with hard flux. We learnt that the two major difficulties in doing cloisonne on a steep sided vessel were, a/ preventing the wires from falling off the curved surface, and b/ placing the bowl on a trivet for firing.

To keep the wires on the bowl, they were placed in small areas at a time, and the vessel had to be on its side. First the bowl was propped on a steep-sided three sided trivet so that the area to be worked on was flat - parallel to the workbench. Trivets with deep arms work best although there is the possibility that damage could be done to the inside of the bowl. This could be repaired later.

Prior to bending wires to fit the design we used fingers and thumbs to shape the wires to fit the curve of the bowl. When the wires were bent to the design, they were attached with a slurry of lotus root powder mixed with klyre fire. The lotus root may also be mixed with distilled water, but we found that the klyre fire slurry held the wires much more firmly. About 1/5th of the surface was worked on each time.

The piece was dried then fired at 1350 degrees F until the wires sank into the basecoat. The piece was then removed from the kiln and left to cool. It was propped on the side again and another set of wires glued on with the lotus root. The first set of wires were wet-packed, dried on top of the kiln then fired to orange peel. At this point the second set of wires should sink into the base coat. We continued laying wires and wet packing in small areas until the vessel was covered completely. The first vertical wires have to withstand repeated firings so they were wetpacked to keep them from coming off.

Once the piece was covered, it was fired right side up. While additional layers of enamel were added to the cloisons, we watched carefully that the enamel does not slump from the wires. If this happens, invert the bowl in the next firing.

Vessels too big to be fired on the trivet can be fired with a torch. After the wires are put in place, the vessel is heated from the underside of the side opposite the wires, until they sink into the base coat. This method is to tack the wires so that the vessel may be fired upright or inverted.

Jean discussed finishing the piece since none of us completed the project. The finished surface may be matte or glossy. The piece must be stoned by hand until the enamel is level with the wires. Alundum stones 150, 220, and 320 grit, and wet/dry paper 420 and 600 grit are used to smooth the surface. Stoning is done under running water to remove any grit that may be left behind.

When the piece is completely smooth a thin layer of oil is wiped over it to give a matte finish. For a glossy finish, the piece is washed well and then refired.

We all enjoyed the workshop. Jean was a very helpful tutor. We relaxed and worked well even though we had one or two problems.

Cynthia Weir

Edmund Masow has responded from Germany to the invitation for additional answers to the "Ten Most Asked Questions in a Cloisonne Workshop" technical article in the previous issue of AEN. Thank you Edmund for this benefit of your experience.

Q1 What thickness should the metal be?

The shape of the metal is very important. A 20cm⁺ can be a strip from 2x10cm or a disc 5cm diameter. A strip is very unstable, the disc is much more stable. So if you make a domed shape, the metal can be thinner than a flat shape. I normally use fine silver .5mm thick for brooches and pendants, and .3 or .4 for earrings. Furthermore it is very important if you have a bezel around your shape or the piece is champlève with a metal rim. This will make the piece stronger.

Q2 Are lead-free or leaded enamels best?

I like the lead-free more and more. It is a prejudice from the 'childhood' of lead-free enamels that they don't have the clarity or brilliance of lead-bearing enamels. At that time the colours, clarity and brilliance were really very bad. The colour range is now as good as the colours of the lead-bearing, sometimes better. Brilliance is undistinguishable from leaded. I have shown lead-free enamels to 'experts' and they could not believe it. I think the problem is that the experienced enamellers cannot change over because they will lose all their knowledge about lead-bearing enamels.

Advantages of lead-free enamels are:

- I estimate the weight after firing is 25% less than with lead-bearing.
- Its easier to grind (maybe this is just a feeling)
- You have almost no problems with pores (holes).
- During all stages of refilling your cells you can change over to fondant (flux) without discolouration.
- Both the silver fondants (fluxes) I know from Thompson in US, and Kecskemet in Hungary have a clarity I have never found in lead bearing enamels.

Q6 Should I wash opaque enamels for cloisonne?

I prefer to sieve the enamels clean instead of washing them. I think it is more effective and quicker. If I dust a greater area, I don't wash or sieve the enamel for the first layer, because I have read that the compacter packing (the finer, the better the packing) is very good for the metal enamel connection.

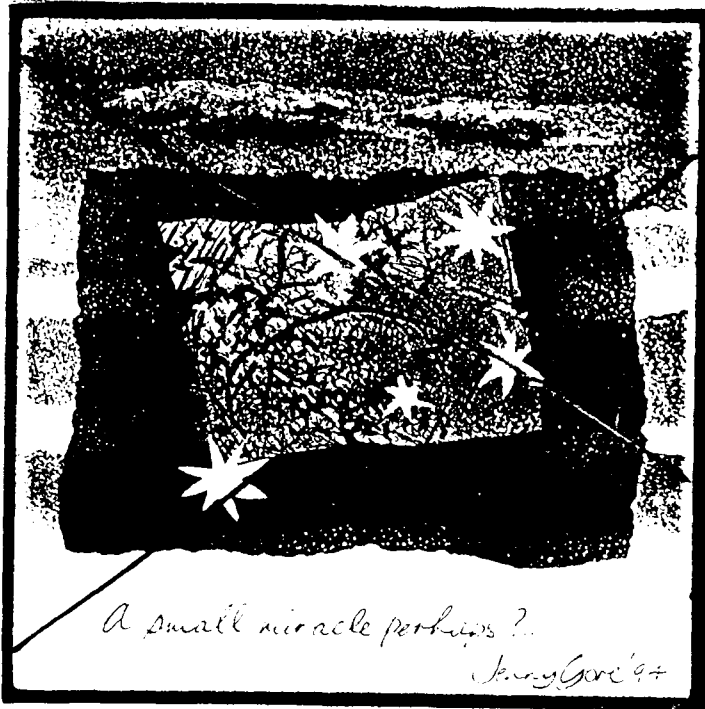
Edmund also comments, in regard to Allan Heywood's article on Enamelling on Sterling Silver Castings, that he finds it quicker to clean the surface of his copper with a sponge and aluminium oxide on his polishing machine. Better than a glass brush.

Quotation

Think of yourselves as artists. Write a project down so you know what you want to do, the reason why you want to do it and how the idea evolved. Know **why** you do things, not only how you do things.

Elizabeth Turrell

Jenny Gore profile continued from P1



All pieces 102mm x 102mm

Two and a half years spent doing the Craft Certificate course in silver jewellery with design and photography in the late seventies have also had an influence on my work. For several years I was a teacher of enamelling locally and a lecturer at the School of Art and Craft certificate course, Adelaide.

Opportunities to exhibit and teach workshops overseas brought the possibility and purpose for travel. I have met some of the most friendly and interesting people and shared enamel experiences via slide/lectures, workshops, long conversations in artists studios, visited enamel factories, galleries and museums, attended seminars and conventions in the USA, Europe and Japan. I have found out a little about other cultures, customs, methods of working etc by hospitality generously extended. It's also great to reciprocate when other enamellers care to venture a little south of Adelaide to Port Noarlunga!

One of my most fascinating experiences was the opportunity to twice visit Japan. I had been commissioned to make ten large panels and several smaller ones for a famous kimono designer. The work was completed here and then taken to Japan for mounting etc. I was invited to the launch of the works in Kyoto, a fantastic occasion, and a learning experience dealing with the Japanese!

Along the way have been many other commissions, some, like the large panel at the Naracoork Caves in the SE of SA were great fun, and others, unmentioned, were more tedious.

The communication between enamellers has been greatly facilitated by many international organisations. The Enamelist Society, USA, Kunstverein Coburg, and Creativ Kreis International in Germany, the now defunct Limoges Biennale in France etc, and I have these to thank for extending my world.

I have been fortunate to exhibit in many countries and to teach workshops in the USA, England, Germany, as well as Australia. I must also add that two of the most welcomed articles in my letterbox are 'Glass on Metal' and our own 'Enamel Newsletter'. Thank you Carolyn!

I would like to quote from Georgia O'Keefe :
"Making your unknown known is the important thing- and keeping the unknown always behind you... catching crystallising your simpler clearer vision of life."

Jenny Gore will be conducting a workshop at the Australian Enamel Symposium in Brisbane in September. See this issue for details.

Australian Enamel Newsletter

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