

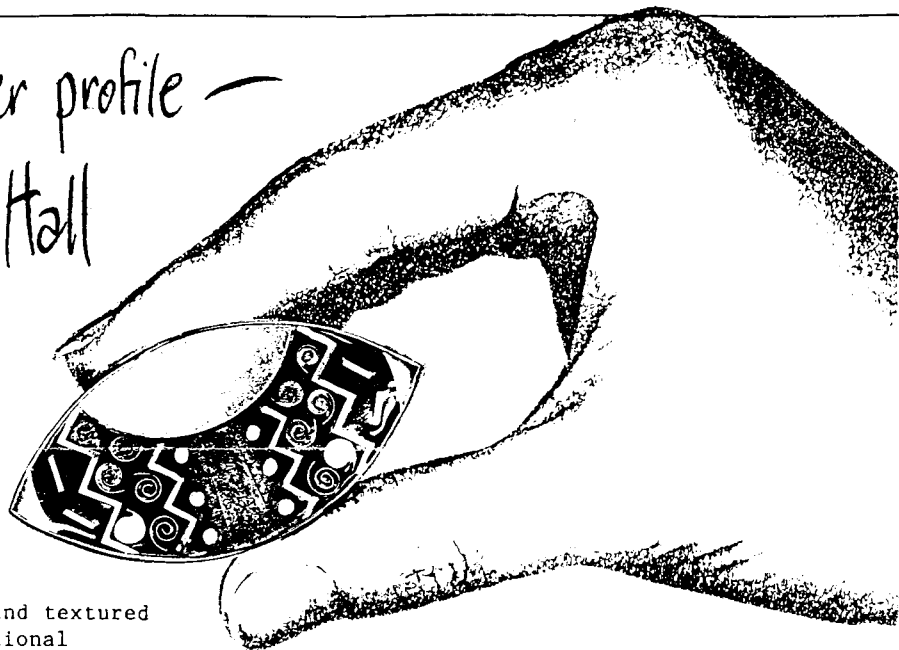
Australian Enamel Newsletter

Issue 10

October 1991



Enameller profile —
Wendy Hall



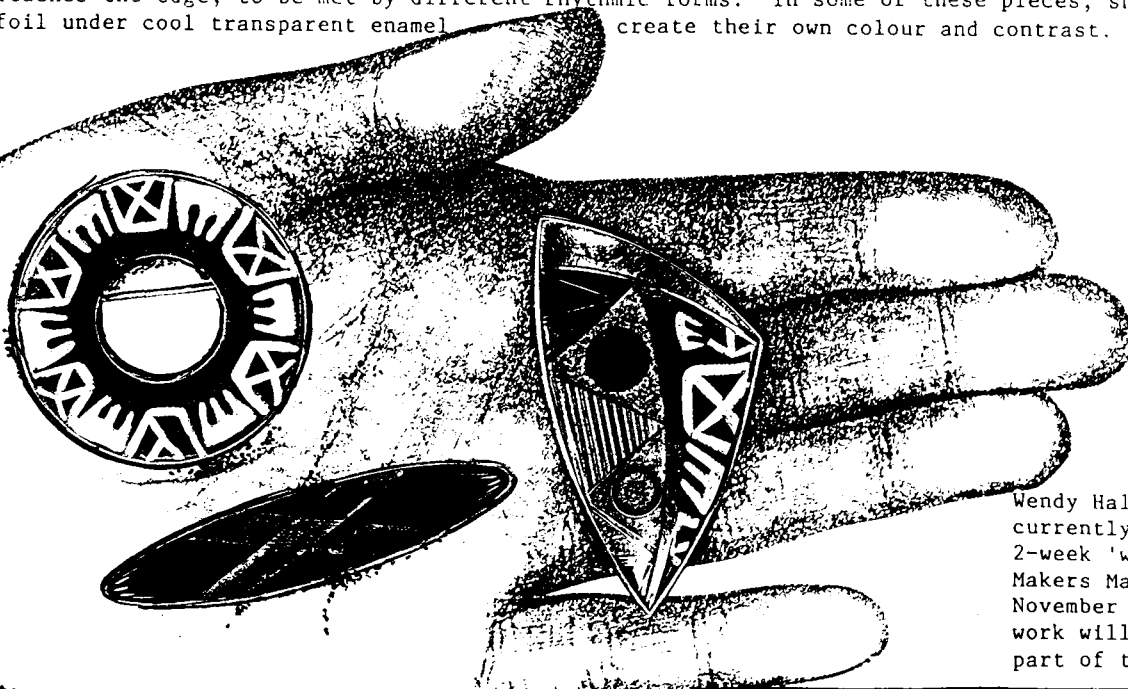
My fascination with enamel grew out of the desire to add a dimension of colour to my designs for jewellery. My inspiration comes from Egyptian jewellery of gold, semi-precious stones and faience, and the polychrome cloisonné inlay found in Barbarian and Anglo-Saxon jewellery.

I use transparent enamels over fine silver and textured 24 carat gold foil and mainly use the traditional enamelling techniques of cloisonné and champlevé. I enjoy using simple external forms in jewellery. Brooches lend themselves perfectly, their outlines uncluttered by findings or attachments.

Over the past few years, I have been pursuing the stylistic direction that emerged in my work for the 'Four Enamellists' exhibition of enamelled jewellery at the Contemporary Jewellery Gallery, Sydney, in 1986: simple geometric forms enclosing complex cloisonné linework; vivid transparent colours washing over embossed gold foil. Sometimes these pieces are complemented by components of carved or silver-inlaid ebony.

In work for the 'New Enamel Work' exhibition with Barbara Ryman in 1989 (again at CJG), I began to rely more upon shapes cut from gold foil to create pattern, texture and contrast. The warmth, richness and depth of colour of 24ct gold under transparent enamel is unsurpassed. I enjoy contrasting this warmth with cool enamel colours. Utilising hand-ground enamel colour mixtures over repeating patterns of textured 24ct foil, I tried to create an effect more sculptural than decorative. The bases of each piece were formed into steep curves using repoussé. Gold foil was rolled through the rolling mill with stainless steel filter fabric to create a texture similar to moiré silk. The pieces were sealed with a film of transparent enamel, stoned back to create a uniform surface, then flash-fired to reveal the texture of the foil against the enamel colour washes. There are no cloisonné wires.

My most recent work is on a slightly larger scale. Repeating cloisonné patterns cover the entire base area and extend right to the edge, so that the completed pieces appear to have been cut from some larger framework. A sliver of embossed gold foil may complete one edge, or the pattern may break before it reaches the edge, to be met by different rhythmic forms. In some of these pieces, shapes cut from gold foil under cool transparent enamel create their own colour and contrast.



Wendy Hall and Barbara Ryman are currently creating work for a 2-week 'window exhibition' at Makers Mark, Melbourne, beginning November 18, 1991. Afterward the work will remain on display as part of the Christmas Show.

Editorial

The regular centre page technical has made way in this issue for the suppliers supplement. I hope this list will help enamellers, as some supplies are still difficult to obtain. We have to accept the reality of ordering from overseas - its not difficult - phones, fax and credit cards make it simpler than ever before. To keep the list as current and accurate as possible, please let me know of any errors or omissions. Businesses change so frequently - its difficult to keep up. Thankyou to those enamellers who helped in the compiling of the information.

The centre page will be back next issue with a piece on copper foils by Sally Aplin. Sally, from Bristol England, was in Australia in 1989 and many of us were able to her some of her interesting work. The next issue will also have reports from workshops at the 91 US Enamellers Convention. I'll be writing on Bill Helwig's Foil Reticulation workshop, and Heather Calnan will write on Martin Hansen's Enamel on Glass workshop.

I am aware that sometimes parts of AEN are photocopied and further distributed and I'm pleased that the information is of value to enamellers, but I ask that enamellers support AEN by encouraging others to subscribe where possible. AEN is non-profit making (indeed it struggles to be non-loss making), and needs all the support it can get. If you're reading this and haven't a sub, please think about it.

Thats all for this issue -

Back to the bench you lot!

Carolyn Delzoppo
editor

Thank you to the following people for their contributions to this issue and the suppliers supplement:

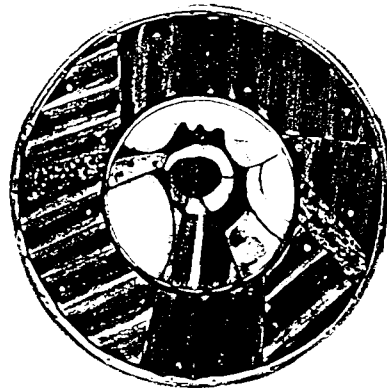
Wendy Hall, Enamellers Association, Barbara Ryman, Don Ross, Janine Tanzer, Margaret Warwick-Clarke, Heather Calnan, Jacquie Sprogoe, Robert Cutforth, Norma Alce, Japan Enamellers Association, Ursula Duba Pollak and Gillian Palmer.

Acquisition

The 11th National Craft Acquisition Award Exhibition is over, with the judge Grace Cochrane of the Powerhouse Museum selecting eleven pieces for the N.T Museum permanent collection.

A brooch in cloisonne enamel, silver and abalone shell by Barbara Ryman of Sydney was acquired.

Other enamellers exhibiting were Wendy Hall and Carolyn Delzoppo.



Experiments with Pen Black

Gillian Palmer replies to an enquiry about her use of substitutes for fine line black. Her experiments may be of interest to others who have developed a sensitivity to this product -

"Heidi Wellings sent me the suggestion to try pen black mixed with some kind of water based medium such as gum trag.

Pen black is used by China Painters; I bought some at a Christchurch supplier (mentioned in one of your newsletters) Cobcraft.

I am still in the experimental stages: so far I have successfully used it to draw fine pen and brush lines on the miniature pictures Nick and I produce on brooches, using lead bearing enamels. I add Thompsons Holding Agent with equal quantity of water, using an eye-dropper. It is not an absolute measurement, I do play around with the consistency.

I find that I must work a little faster than with the oil-based fine line black as the lines dry faster. However the advantage is that you can cut back into the black soon after putting it down to create effects of cross hatching etc, without waiting for it to dry out.

So far my experiments on unleaded enamel have met with mixed success. The lines are inclined to fuzz and bleed.

Firing: I heat the kiln to 800C, then put the work in for a few seconds less than a minute - open the kiln to look at the surface - close it for a further 6 to 12 seconds depending on what I have seen, then take it out. (The work is usually 4 to 6 ovals 30mm x 40mm).

Spitting on the pre-enamelled surface before drawing with the pen is, I find, a great help in getting the liquid to flow.

We are slowly changing over to lead-free enamels, though may need to keep on with some lead-bearing enamel for certain jobs. So far I have found the l/f transparents a bit insipid in situations where I have been accustomed to rich colour, ie over flux or silver. Of course Nick and I always find fast ways of doing things that perhaps should take longer - this we have all worked out in l/b enamel. The challenge is to work out a new range of ideas and techniques with l/f. One advantage I've found with lead-free is that when a number of colours are wet-charged side by side on a pre-enamelled base, they always fire beautifully smooth. So far I've not had any physical incompatibility with colours!"

Exhibitions

Three Studios in Tryon Rd.

Sydney enameller Heather Calnan will be exhibiting her work at her 18th Annual Home Exhibition on 15,16,17 November 10am - 6pm. As well as her regular work, this year Heather will feature enamel beads. Two other studios in Tryon Road will be exhibiting pottery and paintings. 184 Tryon Rd. East Lindfield (Tel 416 5425).

The 10th Annual Christmas Exhibition of the Enamellers Association will be held again at Prouds, Sydney commencing on Thursday December 5 - December 24.

Suppliers update

Enamel Emporium
14441 Memorial Drive #7,
Houston, Texas 77079. United States.
Telephone 713 558 1634

US distributors of Japanese enamelling products, including enamel powders, a large range of stamped copper jewellery blanks, copper vase forms, gold and silver foils - plain and printed with patterns ready for enamelling over. Catalogue available.

Frog Hollow Studio
519 Holloway Ave,
San Francisco, Ca 94112. United States.
Telephone 415 586 8725

Specialist in custom made kiln furniture. Stainless steel trivets in many sizes, point racks, bead-firing racks, lifting tools, press plates, mesh racks. Frog hollow also produce a range of rectangular and circular copper plaques, hydraulically pressed in a two-part masonite die. Made of US20g copper, they are about 1/2" high with a gentle radius at the edges, and can be hung or wall mounted. Shapes can also be pressed with a flanged rim. Catalogue and price list available.

Thompson Enamel
PO Box 310,
Newport, Kentucky 41072. United States.

Thompson have a new catalogue listing recent additions to their range of enamel supplies. New in stock: millefiore, underglazes for copper and aluminium, aluminium foil, overglaze painting colours, bead making holders, plating kits, firing racks, enamelling iron in circles, squares and rectangles, and more book titles. These and other enamel products must be ordered through the Australian distributor, Milltons in Queensland.

Camden Workshops
34 Camden mews,
London NW1 9BX. England.
Tel 071 267 4979 Fax 071 482 4718

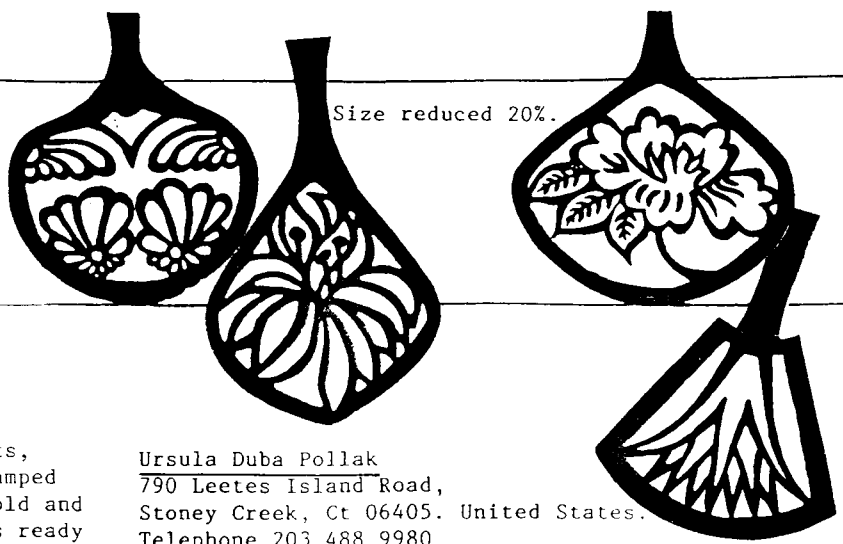
Camden stock the original Latham Jewellery Enamels, a high quality range of 'ready washed' 80/230 mesh powder enamel suitable for use on copper, silver and gold.

Latham are now producing a new range of transparent pastel enamels specially for the art and craft enameller. The twenty colours in the range are very pale so they are ideal for cloisonne and plique-a-jour.

When fired in a pre-heated kiln for approximately 1 1/2 to 3 mins at 780-800C, Latham transparents and opaque colours are brilliant, hard and permanent with a high gloss. Because they are acid resistant, oxidation which forms on exposed metal during firing can be removed easily and quickly with metal cleaners or acid solution.

Sample pack of any 12 colours in vials - £5.00

Editors note - I saw a fired sample board of the new pastel range recently and was very impressed. Absolutely delicious colours.



Ursula Duba Pollak
790 Leetes Island Road,
Stoney Creek, Ct 06405. United States.
Telephone 203 488 9980

For beginner enamellers and those wanting to make an enamelled piece of jewellery without learning metal-work techniques, the blanks produced by US enameller Ursula Duba Pollak will be of interest. Her US16g etched copper pieces are ready for enamelling into champleve and cloisonne pendants. The pendant blanks have bails attached which can be cut, filed and shaped to create the finding, thereby eliminating the need for any metal work in setting the finished enamel. Gold and silver foils can be added for extra brilliance, and some designs have areas big enough for cloisonne wires to be added for greater individuality. Ursula suggests the finished product be gold-plated. All pendants are US\$5.00. Step-by-step instruction sheet with each order. Many styles available. AEN has a few catalogues - send stamped envelope if interested.

Wooden Porch Books
Rt. 1 Box 262,
Middlebourne WV26149. United States.

Specialists in books on enamel, both new and second-hand. Have many old texts on enamelling, some in other languages. If a special book is required, they will register the request and notify if and when located. Mastercard accepted. New in stock - 'The Enamelist' by Kenneth Bates. This is a paperback 1991 reprint of the 1967 edition, and still one of the best practical texts on enamelling. 246pp, black and white illustrations. Price US\$25.00.

Publications

The catalogue of the 91 International Exhibition of Enamelling Art in Japan is available from:
Japan Enamelling Artist Association,
6F-A Asakawa Bldg,
1-19-13 Hyakunin-cho,
Shinyuku-ku, Tokyo 169, Japan.

The price is Y4,500 (approx A\$43.00), plus postage air Y1,440 (approx A\$14.00), sea Y770 (approx A\$8.00). Catalogues of the 89 Exhibition are also available, price Y3,000 (approx A\$28.00). Send payment by International Postal money Order or International Reply Coupons.

Kay Whitcomb, US enameller, edits a newsletter for collectors of enamel called The Cloison. In four issues per year, the letter reports on world wide information of interest to collectors including articles on collections, historical information, exhibitions, books and reports from auctions of antique enamel.
Enquiries to: Kay Whitcomb (editor)
1631 Mimulus Way, La Jolla, Ca 92037. United States.

US Enamellers Convention Report

The US Enamellers Convention in August was just wonderful. The pleasure of being among enamellers, looking at enamel, talking enamel (I won't say breathing enamel, its dangerous) for 7 days was something special for this rather isolated and usually retiring enameller. The exposure to such diversity of use of this medium is very exciting. Works from the exquisite, delicate plique-a-jour goblets of Alex Raphael (UK) to the large confronting steel sculptures of Indulus Urbans of Latvia, show that enamel can be anything we want it to be.

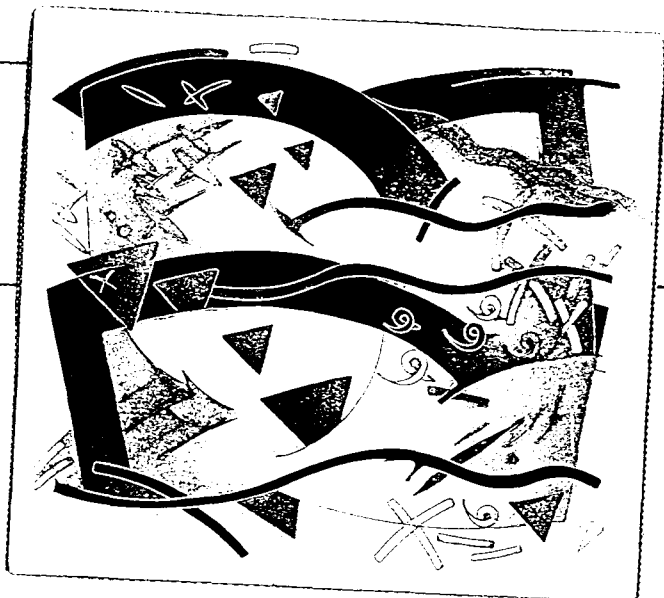
Of the 800-plus pieces on display, more than half were international entries. The Enamellers Association are to be congratulated on such a diverse exhibition.

It's interesting, after time has passed, to think back on the Exhibition and see which pieces are remembered. The mind filters the mass of visual stimulation so that just a few very strong images remain. The beautiful 'Wisteria Vase' by Harlan Butt - a simple and elegant vessel; the whimsical primary coloured paintings of Vitti Praski of USSR; the fish theme sculpture of Valeri Timofeev (USSR) for their creativity and mastery of metal and enamel; the muted wall pieces of Elizabeth Turrell (UK) in folded and incised copper foils; the perfection of form and surface on two large detailed cloisonne vessels by Yohko Yoshimura of Japan. I thought the circus-theme jewellery of Sara Coast and the tiny 'Jonah' brooch of Susan Jones both fun. Barbara Ryman's coast theme brooches were subtle and beautiful. Marilyn Druin's tiny palm-sized cloisonne container demanded to be picked up and stroked.

The exhibition held in the Carnegie Centre, an old theatre complex undergoing renovation, was spacious and mostly well displayed. Works for the wall were given ample room but unfortunately the smaller pieces and objects suffered from being cramped into too few display cases with little light. The cases were very low. It was disappointing to me as a jeweller to see the small pieces displayed so poorly. Jeweller/enamellers struggle constantly to ensure that these miniature works are displayed so that their delicacy can be appreciated. An Enamellers Association should have done it better - with adequate lighting and more space around each object. Some pieces were not labelled and some artists theme pieces were separated into different showcases. But the pleasure of seeing the work overcame these shortcomings. I went back to see the show three times and each time was overwhelmed and saw new things in the work.

I was surprised and really thrilled at the Convention Dinner to find I had won an award for my cloisonne wall pieces in the Exhibition. The two major awards of the Convention were given to Galina Selezneva (USSR) for her painted enamel sculptures, and to Yohko Yoshimura for her cloisonne vessels. Palm Beach (Florida) Enamel Guild donated funds for five minor awards to be given in commemoration of the passing of member enamellers. These were given to Valeri Timofeev (USSR), Alexander Raphael (UK), Erna Spillman (US), and myself.

The convention programme was enjoyable - lectures on history of enamel, in the UK and world wide, short practical talks, technical demonstrations, a display room for suppliers, access to slide viewing facilities, and talk, talk, talk about enamel. I enjoyed a



lecture by Jean Tudor on imagery and influences in her work, and was able to go back to the exhibition and 'see' her work differently afterwards. Harlan Butt gave a technical lecture on TIG welding of copper forms which he introduced and ended with readings of his poetry. A great contrast to the slides of industrial things with knobs and dials that we'd been looking at. I have copies of the poems and will print one on creativity in the next issue. Apart from the work at the exhibition, we got to see enamel being worn and sometimes shyly produced from crumpled boxes in handbags. A feast of enamel, I can never see too much.

I gave a 30 minute lecture on Recent Australian Enamelling, showing selected slides from Sydney David Jones exhibition plus a few additional slides. Using up to three images for each artist, I tried to give a little background on the themes, inspirations and concerns of the work and maker.

It was a quick trip but definitely worthwhile. Now the problem is to find time at the bench to explore all the ideas bubbling up from this intense time with enamel.

Carolyn Delzoppo.

Workshops

JoAnn Tanzer - Screen Printing with Enamels.

JoAnn will be in Australia in 1992 and will be giving two workshops while in Sydney in March. There are 11 places in each workshop (one already filled) at a cost of about \$100.00 for the three days, plus your own material expenses.

JoAnn was until recently Professor of Art at San Diego State University and has had a career of making and teaching art. This is a valuable opportunity to spend creative time with this enquiring and dynamic enameller.

Enquiries to the Secretary of the Enamellers Association, Heidi Wellings, 15 Dewrang Ave, Elanora Heights 2101. Telephone 02 913 9130.

Those interested in registering for the workshops with US enameller Jamie Bennett during the 7th Jewellers and Metalsmiths Group Conference in August 1992 (see Issue 9 AEN) are requested to contact Jacquie Sprogoe 26 Kershaw St, Subiaco 6008, telephone 09 381 1030. The organisers need an indication of possible numbers.

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PO Box 418, Mullumbimby, NSW 2482, Australia.

Subscriptions - Regular \$16.00, Student \$8.00,