

Summer 2005

Georgina Follett Combines Delicate Enamelling With Top Educational Role

Professor Georgina Follett MDes
RCA, FRSA, FCSD

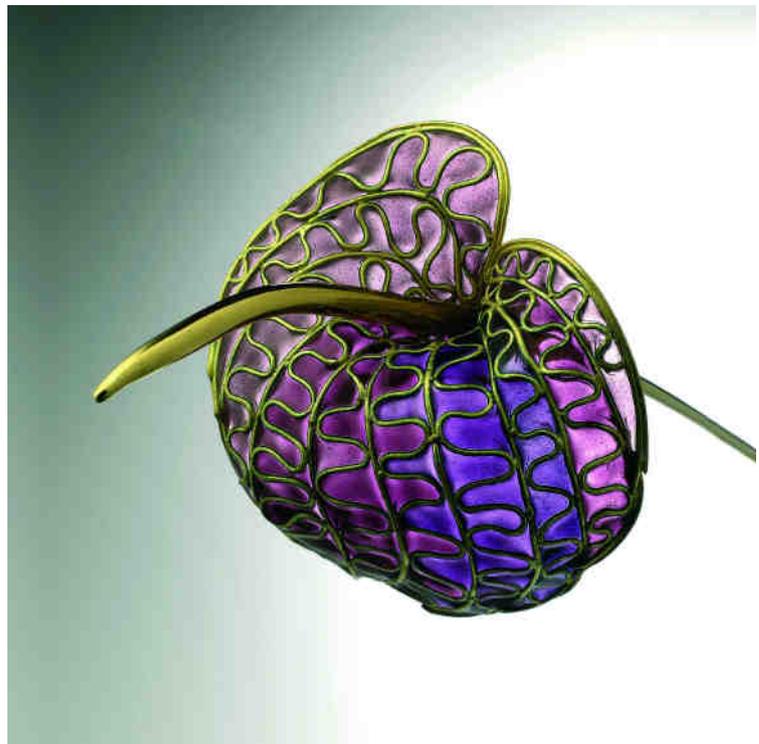
Georgina Follett is currently Dean of the Faculty of Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design at the University of Dundee. She is a member of the Scottish Higher Education Funding Committee, Chair of the Quality Working Group and Joint Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee, Chair of the Quality Assessment Committee and a member of the Quality Assurance Agency Scotland Board.

Born in London, Georgina is a graduate of the Royal College of Art. She has substantial experience of working with jewellery companies and has undertaken numerous commissions for public and private bodies, as well as having undertaken collaborative projects and consultancies with industry. Her work investigates the development of plique-à-jour enamelling with precious metals and is held in numerous private collections as well as in the permanent collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Roy Strong collection in the Victoria and Albert, and the National Museums of Scotland.

Georgina has been actively involved in external collaboration with industry and was successful in attracting funding to support the IDEAS (Industry Design Education action Scotland) Project for research into the diversity of quality and quantity of industrial collaborations in Higher Education Institutions in Scotland.

She was one of three partners in the Dundee by Design project, which successfully attracted £1.2 million EU funding to bring design expertise and technology to the Small to Medium-sized Enterprise sector, helping to speed the development of new products to market.

Georgina Follett has been actively involved in numerous advisory committees and is an indexed member of the Crafts Council. She has held the Chair of the National Association of 3D Design Education, has been a previous Vice President of the Chartered Society of Designers, is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and Manufacturers, The Chartered Society of Designers and a Founding Fellow of the Institute of Contemporary Scotland.



Arum Lily brooch by Georgina Follett
18ct gold, plique-à-jour enamel
3.5 inches wide
Photographs by Shanon Tofs

Although for the last eighteen years Georgina Follett has worked full time in higher education, she has continued her investigations into plique-à-jour, a vocation that began while she was studying jewellery and enamelling at The Royal College of Art. With knowledge of the history of plique-à-jour and an awareness of how it is used by contemporary enamellers, Georgina's approach has been to extend the limits, both technically and in the way that plique-à-jour jewellery interacts visually with the body. All of her pieces are intended to be worn next to the body, so that light can shine through the enamel and cast colours on the skin.

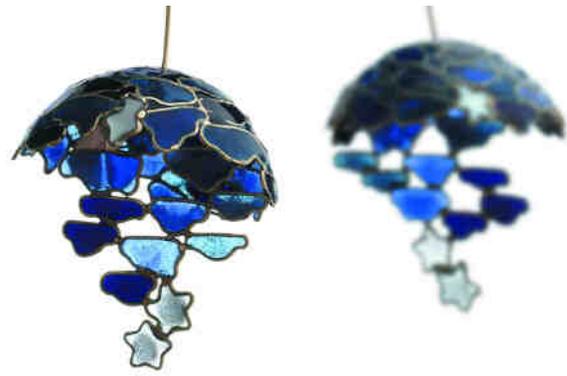
In order to achieve a perfectly clear flat layer of enamel, suspended between wires of 18 ct gold, Georgina uses only water to hold the unfired enamel in place. Because only a very small amount of enamel can be applied by this method, many applications and firings are required to build up the strength of enamel and intensity of colour. This

labourious technique, however, does allow Georgina to work freely on three-dimensional forms, as exemplified by the Arum Lily brooch. A particular aim of her investigations has been to increase the size of the cells that support the enamel. The cell sizes in the Arum Lily brooch can be appreciated by comparing them to the dimensions of the enamelled lily as a whole – three inches high by three inches wide. Georgina estimates that this piece took 40 firings to complete.

Ironically, in her eighteen years in higher education in Scotland, Georgina has never taught jewellery. She has been able to continue her involvement with plique-à-jour, working in her studio at home, since this counts as part of her research for the university.

Through her involvement with the Quality Assurance Agency, which looks at the quality of teaching and learning in higher education, Georgina Follett is well aware of the changes that have occurred in the teaching of jewellery since she was a student. She feels that the quality of work coming from jewellery courses has been diminishing over the years, due to causes independent of the skills of the teachers. She cites four reasons for the changes: 1. students can no longer work with gold because of the cost; 2. the length of time to complete the courses is much reduced (Georgina was able to spend three years as a post-graduate and now only one year is allowed); 3. too much is covered in the curriculum (e.g. business skills, history, theory); and 4. students are suffering from over-assessment.

This last point is of particular importance for Georgina. Assessment is a worry for both students and teachers, because of the demand that success be achieved at every stage of the course. This demand operates contrary to the fact that, in Georgina's opinion, failure is a necessary part of learning. Particularly in enamelling, everyone makes mistakes all the time and risk taking is the essence of advancement both of the individual and of enamelling itself. She feels that teachers must be able stand back and



Night Sky earrings by Georgina Follett
18ct gold, mother of pearl, plique-à-jour enamel
1.5 x 2.5 inches

give students time to learn for themselves. These days this only happens on professional doctorate programmes.

Georgina has mixed views of courses in which students are only given a few hours' introduction to enamelling and then encouraged to invent their own individual approach, without reference to any of the traditional techniques. On the one hand she feels that you have to know the rules to break them, but on the other she believes that developing new technologies and methods will keep enamelling alive. These views merge when the results of play and experimentation grow into a life long engagement. Although it is wonderful when new ways of enamelling are discovered, the hard part is taking the exciting experiments forward, turning them into work that can stand scrutiny outside the studio. Georgina Follett's message for new enamellers is that they have to keep going. It can take a long time for new work to be developed and accepted. In all respects, time is the requirement.

(cont.on page 12)



Bluebells by Georgina Follett
18ct gold with plique-à-jour enamel
Each flower is 1/3 inch in diameter



New Full Members

Grace Girvan

Since Grace Girvan featured in a New Graduate article in the Winter 2004 issue of the Newsletter, her career as a jeweller working in enamels has progressed rapidly. Last Autumn she participated in the Chelsea Craft Fair, and this spring her work was in the Lesley Craze Gallery as part of an exhibition featuring jewellers from Edinburgh. She was also invited to take part in an exhibition in Japan, showing work made in collaboration with a Japanese ceramicist.

Since the Chelsea Craft Fair, Grace finds that galleries approach her. She is busy filling orders and working for exhibitions, including a big touring exhibition which will visit major galleries. This success leaves little time for Grace to experiment with enamelling: at the present she is only working with a technique she invented for herself. Now she would like to learn about other enamelling techniques, even if she will not end up using them. She wants to continue developing work inspired by the sea, still incorporating found objects but with a larger emphasis on enamel work.

<gracielou21@hotmail.com>



Razor Shell neckpiece by Grace Girvan
Silver, copper and enamel
Hanging section 20cm

Ann Little

Since the article about Ann Little that appeared in the Spring 04 issue of the BSOE Newsletter, her work has undergone a transformation. This is typical of Ann Little, who likes her designs to evolve every six months or so. The process has been encouraged by a Scottish Arts Council Grant, giving her time to take a class in Drawing for Sculpture and do further drawings of her own. The project is to end with Ann Little having an exhibition at the Scottish Gallery during the Edinburgh Festival, 2005, featuring the work she has made after receiving the grant.

One stipulation of this project was that Ann should look for inspiration in her surroundings. This led her to take photographs of architecture in Edinburgh and, in particular, to take note of the colour of the sky as it appeared above the roof tops. Because she was drawing with coloured pencils, Ann developed a way of enamelling that mirrored their spontaneity and the quality of the Scottish light.

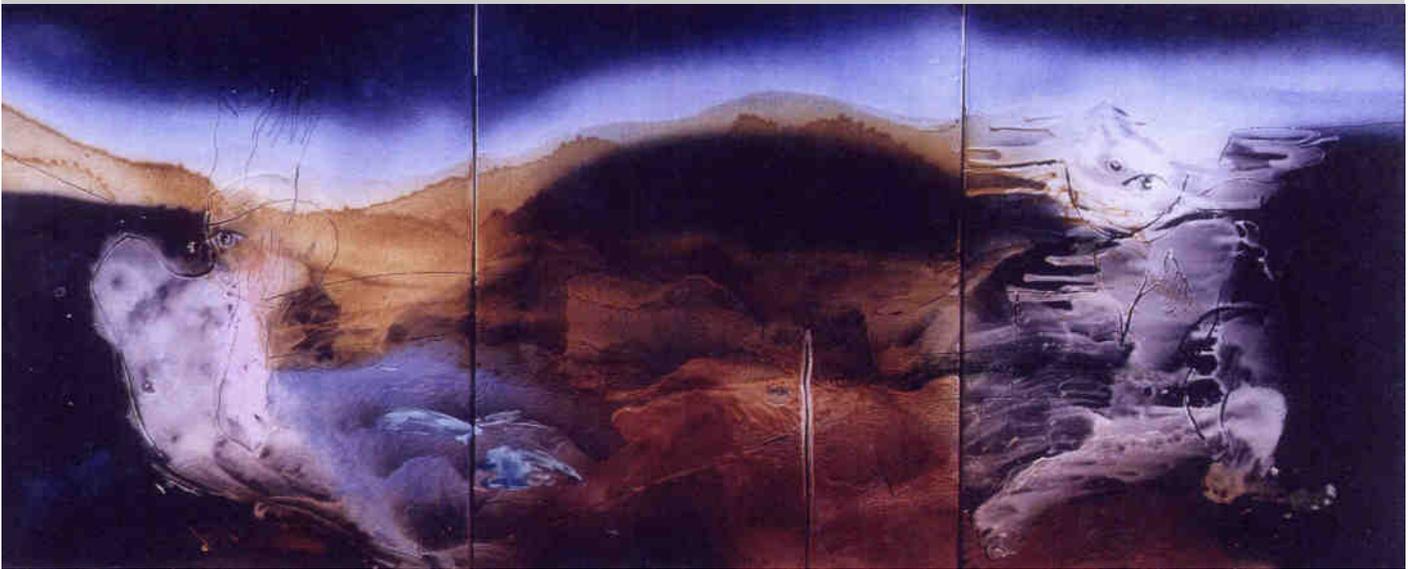
<annlittle@jeweller99.freeserve.co.uk>



Three pendants by Ann Little
Enamel, silver
4 x 4 x 4cm, 4 x 4 x 4cm, 1 x 1 x 12cm

Petr Bednar: Enamel Artist in the Czech Republik

Although he doesn't speak any English, Petr Bednar has been able, with the help of his daughter, to write something about his beginnings as an enameller, his development, and his subsequent success. His eloquent, deeply felt and haunting work speaks for itself.



Moment in Nature by Petr Bednar
Liquid enamel on steel
80 x 120cm

My interest in art started while I was at school. I was in secondary technical school at the time and was able to take painting classes in the afternoons, but my real knowledge of art came from books. In 1968 I began to work in an enamel factory that produced kitchen ware. Here I met enamel technology for the first time, which interested me immediately. There was an artist at the factory who taught me all the secrets of this technology and showed me enamel history too. In 1970 I made my first attempt at using enamel technology for art.

I have had many shows which are important to me, four of them in museums, including ones in Prague and Cologne. Two years ago my work was shown at the Christal Gallery in Limoges. But enamel art is not my job, it is only my hobby.

I have met a lot of people who shaped my destiny in my work and these are my inspiration, along with the beautiful mountains where I live. In my pictures, on one side is a person and in the opposite side is the beautiful nature around my house. This is the story of my life.

In my work I use the spray gun and brushes. At first I paint my idea. Then I transfer this idea into the enamel. The colours are the other story.

Now I work for the firm Ametyst Moravia. We produce enamelled signs and it is here that I make all of my enamelled pieces, from small to large. The firm is always looking for clients in the areas of advertising and architects.



Desire by Petr Bednar
Liquid enamel on steel
120 x 70cm

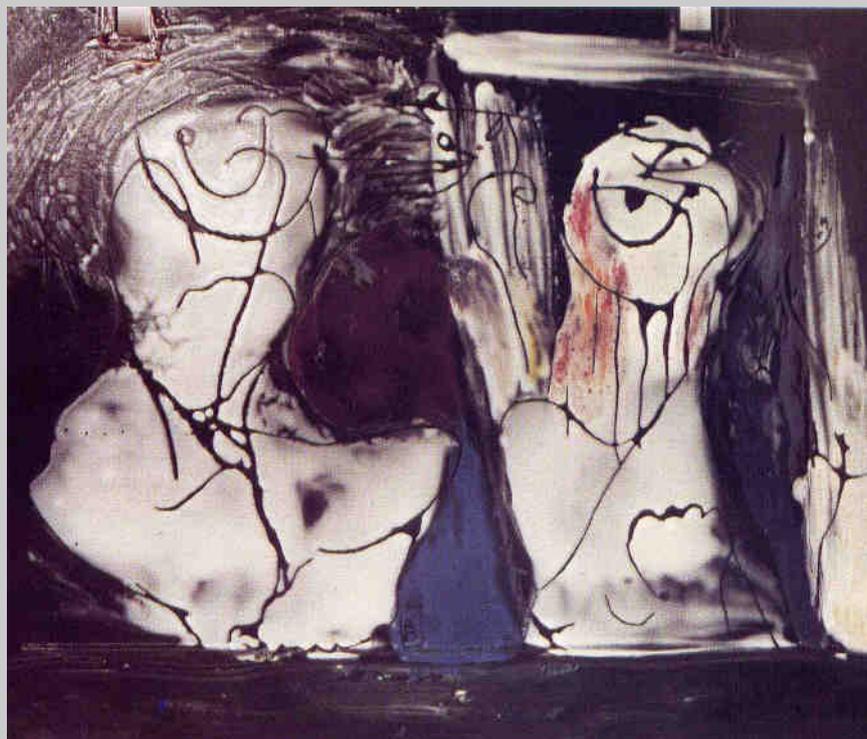
In the Czech Republic it isn't so difficult to find a hall for a show, but it depends on money. I want my art to be known to people who are interested in enamel. In our country, only a few people make enamel panels. One reason is that the technique is expensive and only a few firms use it. The other

reason is that there is only a small interest from architects in enamel.

In my neighbourhood, there are three enamellers - myself and Eva Kucerová, also a panellist, and Barbara Baumruková, who is a jeweller.



Pyramid by Petr Bednar
Liquid enamel on steel
120 x 100cm



In Front of the House by Petr Bednar
Liquid enamel on steel
60 x 80cm

New Full Members

Louise Richards

Louise Richards's innovative pod necklace is fashioned from a real pod that she found in Barcelona. Inspired by the shape to make a locket from the two halves, Louise felt that covering one half with enamelled copper would serve to take the piece beyond a simple locket made from a seed pod. The enamelled surface was made from copper foil on which enamel was fired. The copper foil was then bent to fit the pod, causing the enamel to crack. It is then carefully re-fired, with the addition of gold foil, to preserve the texture. The copper foil was attached to the pod with silver wires which formed a hinge, so the pod could be opened and closed. The pod was secured by the addition of a bead which slotted into a silver loop.

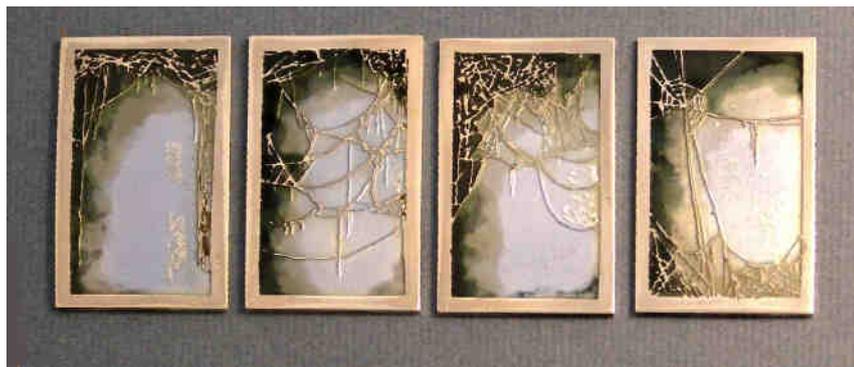


Seed Pod locket by Louise Richards
Silver, copper foil, pod and watermelon tourmalins
The pod is 7cm long

Having received a BTEC Diploma from the Cass, Louise went on to take a City and Guilds in enamelling, finishing her studying at Cass in 2002. Since then, in partnership with her father, she started out to renovate a

building in West London to use as a workshop, but found that the space was so large and well lit that it could function as a gallery. Their Trackside Gallery opened over a year ago, selling Louise's enamels and the work of other jewellers, craftsmen, and artists.
<louise@tracksidegallery.co.uk>

Marian Wallis



Views From the Garden Shed Window by Marian Wallis
Each panel is 1.5 x 3.5 inches
Copper, silver foil, enamel

All of Marian Wallis's enamels are based on her drawings, which are executed with pen. Drawing, for Marian, has been the cornerstone for all of her work, both in enamelling and in other media. She finds her subjects in church yards, memorials, church porches, wrought iron gates - anything with a creepy, tendrilly aspect. Over the years her drawings have filled many sketch books.

After studying illustration in the 1960's, Marian Wallis taught art for many years. Finally she decided to give up teaching so that she could

devote her time to concentrating her own interests. At this point she began to take jewellery classes at the Cass, something she had always wanted to do. It was here that she was introduced to enamelling by Joan MacKarell and loved it. For her, enamelling was a resolution of all the aspects of the things she liked to do best.

Marian's technique is to have her drawings transferred to silver by photo-etching. This ensures that her designs keep the sensitive quality of the pen lines. She applies enamel by wet packing freely, laying down the enamels as if they were paint. She now finds that she is very busy with enamelling. She receives many commissions as a result of the Open Studio days in her area. She also shows her work in the Art in Action Gallery in Waterperry and at the Trackside Gallery, Acton. Although she produces many panels, usually as large as 6 x 4 inches, she mainly sells her enamelled jewellery.
<marian.wallis@ntlworld.com>

JoAnn Tanzer Remembered by Her Students

As Head of the Department of Enamelling at San Diego State University for thirtyfive years, Dr. JoAnn Tanzer had a major impact on the growth of enamelling both in the United States and internationally. She was also a major enamel artist, her panels being exhibited widely in museums and galleries. Travelling the world to meet enamellers, it was JoAnn who promoted the Riso Screen technique to western enamellers.

YOU CAN'T COOK FISH IN AN ENAMEL KILN

A Remembrance of JoAnn Tanzer
With love from her students

It is empty now. It used to hold ten kilns, thirty or forty students, one enthusiastic, incredibly nurturing professor, and a lot of dreams. We were a family, a Monday, Wednesday or an all day Friday family. Graduate students were an anytime family. We knew each other, our talents and our warts. Our professor accepted us for who we were, knowing that the best in each of us was yet to come.

On campus, when we were speaking to other professors, she was referred to as Dr. Tanzer, in deference to her academic title. But, in that very large enamel laboratory of learning and experiment, she was respectfully addressed as JoAnn. We never had the feeling that this was solely JoAnn's space. We were permitted to be the life force in that room for the short time that we occupied it.

JoAnn shared with her students enamel's enormous range of possibilities, but the choices of direction were ours to make. We were encouraged to learn the traditions of enamel, to make new discoveries, to take the medium as far as it would go - to make it our own. We also had to learn the demands of enamel, such as orderliness, concentration, cleanliness, and respect for our fellow students. Who can forget the dreaded end-of-semester enamel firescale removal? If we were lucky, we might happen to be "sick" on that day and

not have to meticulously pick tiny black specks of firescale out of the enamel with a paintbrush.

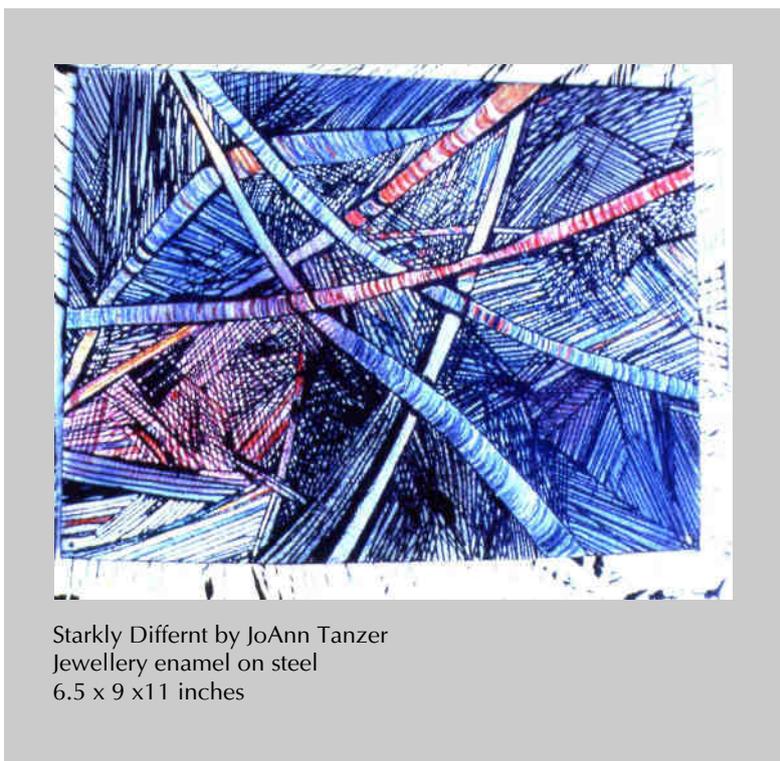
"Draw, always draw," was an often heard phrase from JoAnn. She followed her own belief and had hundreds of sketchbooks in which she had drawn her visions and thoughts each night before she fell asleep. Never one to have idle hands, JoAnn was always working when we were working in the classroom. We became mesmerized as we watched the personal use of sgraffito, stenciling, painting, and screening that made her enamels so unique, so

beautiful, with the unmistakable stamp of JoAnn Tanzer. She was, however, always happy to interrupt whatever she was doing to help a student, to offer a solution for a problem, or offer encouragement when we needed it.

But, nothing lasts forever, not a moment in time, nor a journey, nor an incredible human being, and so, on February 20, 2005, after a fierce fight with Parkinson's disease, this world said goodbye to our beloved JoAnn. She had spent thirty-seven years nurturing, teaching,

prodding, and believing in her students. She has left her mark, her legacy, her empty shoes that will never be filled. We miss her smile, her joy, her sense of humor, her ease, her confidence that art was the only way of life for herself as she held out an invitation for us to join her in that same pursuit.

And...fish can be cooked in an enamel kiln. It has been done...in the enamel lab...at San Diego State University.



Starkly Differnt by JoAnn Tanzer
Jewellery enamel on steel
6.5 x 9 x 11 inches

British Society of Enamellers' Members Receive Awards and Recognition

Both full and associate members of the Society have done well in events in the UK and abroad.

In the 18th International Cloisonné Jewelry Contest, the Japan Shippo Conference Juried Exhibition, Penny Gildea was the winner of the Kiyomizu Sannenzaka Museum Award. Her necklace (right) was inspired by the aerial photographs of Yann Athus-Bertrand, one of which showed patterns of a dried up river bed in the Sahara. The units were designed on one strip of silver so that the patterns would continue from one unit to the other.

In the Goldsmiths' Craftsmanship and Design Awards 2005, Garth While was commended in the Medals category. Melissa Rigby's silver and polypropylene brooch was exhibited in the Production Jewellery section and Hali Baykov's silver necklace was shown in Fine Jewellery. Fred Rich, the only non-member of the BSOE exhibiting in the Enamels section, received the Gold classification for his Silver Enamelled Tea Set.

The BSOE was represented in the Enamelling Category by Hali Baykov, Angela Haynes, and Chris Walker. Gillie Hoyte Byrom was awarded the Silver category for her painted enamel 'Portrait of Richard Campbell'.



Sahara necklace by Penny Gildea
Silver and enamel
The largest unit is 1.5 x 2.5cm

Lead Revisited

by Pat Johnson

The information about the respiratory mask that I included in the article 'Encounter With Lead' contained a typing error. The masks are made by 3M and the serial number is 9322, not the number quoted in the original article. Doing a web search using the words '3M respirator mask 9322', I found a supplier company* whose web site is <www.safetysupplies.co.uk>. The page that gets to the mask directly is <www.safetysupplies.co.uk/trolleyed/5>. On this page of masks; 9322 can be found by scrolling. The cost seems to be £1.90 for 10. I assume VAT and postage would be added on.

*The company supplying the mask is Deltawaite Ltd, Roose Road, Barrow-in-Furness, LA12 0RP
Tel: 01229 821959 Fax: 01229 820377: e-mail: info@safetysupplies.co.uk

An article in the April 2005 issue of Glass On Metal, page 42, raises the issue of lead being stored in bones, with adverse consequences in old age. Six references are quoted, citing research done between 1996 and 2004. Using the titles, an internet search produced synopses of most of these papers, which found that moderately high levels of lead in bones of older men were correlated with a range of health problems, e.g. cataracts, renal and cognitive functions. Women were not included in the study.

Unfortunately the technology for testing the lead levels in bones is not routinely available to members of the public and people working with lead bearing enamels cannot find out how much lead they are actually retaining. This would tend to suggest that we should be fearful of

working with lead bearing enamels, and indeed I am glad to know about the effects of lead retention in bones, of which I was unaware when I wrote the article 'An Encounter with Lead' in the Spring 2005 issue of the BSOE newsletter.

However, the medical establishment that sets recommendations for safe levels of lead in the blood must be taking into account such research when they set the levels. Therefore, if enamellers have their blood tested periodically and are found to be within the safe range, it would seem that their work with leaded enamels is not causing them any long term ill effects. If more information and discussion is forthcoming about this issue, further updates will be included in the newsletter as and when they appear.

Eureka! A Gory Story That Led To Glory

by Irene Cockroft

This incredible 20-metre long, 66-panel enamel designed by Sir Sidney Nolan (1917-1993) presents a golden but gory image. It depicts an historic clash of arms in Australia's wild colonial gold-rush days.

In 1854 diggers at the Eureka goldmine, resentful of being taxed without Parliamentary representation, built a defensive stockade against Crown troopers sent to enforce a rapacious licensing system. The rebellion was brutally crushed by police and military forces. Five soldiers and 30 miners were killed in the skirmish.

Sir Sidney Nolan worked in collaboration with two enamellers, Patrick Furse and Robin Banks, using Miss Bank's studio. The work was completed in London in 1965. The *Eureka* commemorative mural – all 75 square metres of it – took 102 kg of transparent jewellery enamel fired onto 1.5 tonne of heavy gauge copper sheet. It is an outstanding

example of 'public' enamel, and can be seen on display in the Foyer of The Reserve Bank of Australia at 60 Collins Street, within Melbourne's historic Golden Mile city centre, built with gold-boom profits.

Irene Cockroft is curating 'New Dawn Women - Women in the Arts and Crafts', an exhibition of work by women active in the Arts and Crafts and Suffrage movements at the dawn of the 20th century. Many enamels will be included in the display. The exhibition will take place at The Watts Gallery, Compton, nr Guildford, Surrey, from July 1 to Sept 28. For more information phone the gallery at 01483 810235 or visit their web site <www.wattsgallery.org.uk>.

In addition, Irene Cockroft will give a late night lecture on 'Women In the Arts and Crafts' at the Victoria and Albert Museum on July 20. Phone 020 7942 2000.



A thirty foot long detail of the Eureka Memorial Mural. Commissioned by the The Reserve Bank of Australia, it can be seen on display at 60 Collins Street, within Melbourne's historic *Golden Mile* city centre.

Technical details of the enamelling of the Eureka Memorial Mural, provided by Robin Banks

When Australian artist Sir Sidney Nolan was given the commission to produce a mural on the theme of the uprising at the Eureka Stockade, he wanted to do the work in enamel. Robin Banks was recommended to assist him and it was she who suggested enamelling on copper. In her studio in London, Robin had perfected the demanding technique of enamelling large copper panels. To keep the panels perfectly flat, she used 14 gauge copper, but because copper becomes soft after firing, the large panels were difficult to handle. If simply lifted off of the trivets by hand, the weight of the flexible copper, even when stiffened with enamel, would cause the panel to bend and the enamel to crack. This was

solved by employing a special framework which supported the panels as they were lifted on and off the trivets. (To support the copper during firing, Robin's trivets had pins four inches apart.)

Although handsome geometric designs, enamelled with flux and a range of elegantly clear transparent and strong opaque enamels, were characteristic of Robin's own work, she was very skilled in the technique of applying flux and transparent enamels loosely over copper oxide and large surfaces. The sixtysix panel mural, with each panel being 3' x 4', was enamelled using just two firings for each panel.

For the first firing, a backing enamel was sprayed on and when dry, the panel was reversed and Sir Sidney Nolan created the design on the front by dropping white jewellery enamel through his fingers, utilizing the

cont. page 11

technique of Australian aboriginal sand painting. The panel then had its first firing, which produced the copper oxide over the exposed copper background. To remove most of the oxide, Robin covered the background of the design with acid and then quickly took it off with a brush. The copper surface was restored except where some oxide was preserved by stray enamel grains outlining the drawing. Robin is a perfectionist and she made every effort to prevent copper oxide particles from popping on to the enamel, even to the point of making sure the edges of the panels were perfectly clean. She then sifted transparent

enamels over the whole of the panels, using the vigorous movement to achieve the effect of turmoil and wind. The pale blues, greens and turquoise enamels coloured the white of Sir Sidney Nolan's drawing and turned red over the areas where copper oxide remained.

The finished panels were bonded to a wooden backing using hot adhesive, a process carried out by the firm who picked up the panels from Robin's studio. After being shipped to Australia, the mural was mounted on the walls of the Reserve Bank in Melbourne, Australia, where the mural can still be seen.

Enamels at The Victoria and Albert Museum

Several years ago members of the BSOE conducted a lightening survey, in the hour before we started our AGM, of the location of enamels on display in the whole of the V&A. No department was left unvisited and in nearly every gallery - furniture, fashion, iron work, China, Japan, Medieval, 18th century Europe, 20th Century - enamel was found in one form or another. Although we never published the results of that survey to our members, the BSOE has since then been interested in the perception of enamel at the V&A.

We have been sending the BSOE newsletter to Marian Campbell, Senior Curator of the Metalwork Section, in charge of medieval and goldsmiths' work and enamels, because we knew she had researched medieval enamels. When Judith Crouch, curator of Enamels in the Ceramics and Glass Section, took part in one of the events connected with the opening of the new Craftsense Gallery in Bilston (see the BSOE newsletter, Winter 05), it was realised that the Ceramics and Glass Section was also involved with part of the V&A's enamel collection. Other enamels would be housed with Jewellery, and Chinese and Japanese enamels would be in the charge of the Far Eastern Section of the Asian Department. At this point curators of Metalwork and Ceramics and Glass Sections were contacted, to find out in which different departments enamels were housed.

We were sent a very helpful Department Guide, published in 1980, outlining the V&A collection of metal work. In it there was the following paragraph; 'The Department is responsible for those European enamels executed in the following ways: cloisonné, champlevé, bassetaille. Painted enamels, unless incorporated in pieces of jewellery, or on silver, are in the care of the Ceramics Department, while if they are miniatures they are the responsibility of Prints and Drawings Department.' For more information about the location of enamels made by other techniques, such as enamelled steel panels and vessels completely covered with enamel but employing none of the above techniques, it was advised that Eric Turner, curator of the 20th Century area of the Metalwork department, be approached.

Eric Turner, gave the information that the enamels they do have, which are not numerous, are sent to curators of the relevant 20th century areas, e.g. Metalwork, Architectural Panels, and in some cases, Ceramics. He commented that

he was aware of the need to look at 20th century and contemporary enamels and was very glad to accept the CD of all the back issues of the BSOE newsletter and to see the future issues as they appear. As far as acquiring new pieces was concerned, money for acquisitions was tight and in recent times not much had been coming in to the V&A through bequests, but offers of enamel pieces would be looked at by the relevant committees

Works in all media at the V&A could be housed in any of a number of the collections. Objects from Western cultures are stored by techniques and materials while oriental work is classified by geography. A data base of all pieces, (www.vam.ac.uk), gives locations, catalogue information and records, and is expanding all the time. It is because enamels form a relatively small part of the V&A's collection that they do not have a section devoted to the medium.

Recently, enamelling has formed a popular part of the Create! Young People's Programme, organised by David Judd at the V&A. This ongoing programme of workshops and events for 11 to 18 year olds is designed to help young people learn and appreciate design and production techniques, with workshops often linked to the current special exhibitions at the V&A. From the object list at the planning stage of the International Arts and Crafts exhibition, David Judd realised that enamelling would feature. As most young people no longer experience enamelling techniques at school or college, it seemed appropriate to run workshops on the subject. Bonnie Mackintosh taught the courses, well supported by the V&A staff. Twelve students attended, learning how to make a small vessel out of copper shim and then to enamel it with Wet Process enamel and onglaze colours.

Colin Muhlberg and Morna Hinton advised by Judith Crouch, made a video showing the construction and enamelling of a box, now on display in the new British Galleries, which opened 2001 and cover the Tudor to Victorian periods. The jewellery gallery is currently closed for renovation and is due to re-open 2008. Some medieval champlevé and renaissance Limoges painted enamels are presently being chosen for inclusion in the new Medieval and Renaissance galleries which will open in 2009.

The Design and Making of the River of Colour Neckpiece

by Georgina Follett

I wanted this neckpiece to move away from the predominating floral forms present in my work and to see if, in avoiding these forms, I could produce a piece that conveyed the essence of the idea 'River of Colour'.

I developed a repeat structure which allowed complete articulation, giving the piece a fluidity of movement.

I used photographs of sweet pea flowers, because of my fascination with their quality of colour. A single photograph did not convey the dominance of colour, but by cutting into the photographs, I was able to reconstruct the colour by overlapping images to form a long undulating 'river'. The result was electrifying, unbroken colour, the visual effect that I wanted.

The visual element was comprised of circles and arcs, a circle forming the whole neckpiece, which is sub-divided into smaller circles, in turn divided into arcs. The piece needed to have wonderful articulation around the neck, causing it to adhere to the form of the body and making it easy to wear.

Enamel tests surprised me; the impact of the yellow gold changed the colours of the enamel so as to be unrecognisable from those selected. I had to reconsider. Subsequent tests revealed that I could not achieve the colour originally intended. I had to compromise and work with the results. Once I began to assemble the piece, I was able to examine the form. I felt that the lower edge needed additional visual strength. I added coloured beads of



River of Colour neckpiece by Georgina Follett
18ct yellow gold, semi-precious stones, enamel
1.5 inches deep, 16 inches long

semi-precious stones, organised to accentuate the colour of the enamel. These additions gave visual strength to the piece.

The form works well. It articulates beautifully over the body. The colour dominates the neckpiece; the fabrication methods are empathetic to the whole. However I am disappointed with the effect that the yellow gold has on the enamel. It is overly dominant and subdues the colour, an effect redressed by adding the stones to the outer edge. Compromise has provided a result that achieves most of my established goals.

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Everyone is welcome to submit articles, information and letters to this newsletters at any time. Due dates for the spring, summer, autumn and winter issues the middle of February, May, August and November respectively.

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A CD containing PDF files of all the newsletters from Summer 1996 onwards, plus a complete index of the contents, is available. £10 for BSOE members, £25 for non-members. Contact the editor.

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