Creative Experimentation with Enamel in Jewelry

Diedra Burandt

Fort Hays Kansas State College

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CREATIVE EXPERIMENTATION WITH ENAMELED JEWELRY

An Abstract
Presented to
Dr. Joel Moss
and the Faculty of the Graduate Council
Fort Hays Kansas State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Art Education

by
Diedra B. Buresht
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CREATIVE EXPERIMENTATION WITH ENAMEL IN JEWELRY

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

It was the purpose of this study (1) to explore the numerous possibilities of combining enamel and sterling silver, (2) to develop strength of expression and technical proficiency through the medium of jewelry, (3) to explore techniques applicable for use in the junior and senior high school, and (4) to produce a wide range of examples (necklace, bracelet, cuff links, etc.) for demonstration purposes.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This creative thesis is an outgrowth of the experimental work done on the sterling and enamel bracelet (figure 1). Due to the difficulties and rewards encountered in completing this piece, the investigator wished to further pursue the subject by repeating similar and varied problems. Throughout the experimentation various methods of incorporating enamel (cloisonne, champlève, plique à jour, Limoges, and wet charging); and various methods of shaping silver (sawing, filing, etching, press casting, and melting) were used. Because of the exigencies resulting from the execution of (figure 1), (figure 2) was designed with the purpose of eliminating as many of the technical difficulties as possible. As a result many problems were solved, however, freedom of design
was sacrificed for technique. In (figure 3) the investigator was still struggling with the problem of arriving at a better balance between technique and freedom or creativity. In (figure 6) more control was gained in that the design conception was thought of in relation to the medium's possibilities and not as something imposed on the medium. (Figures 6 through 12) show that the understanding of this principle enabled the best utilization of the expressive powers of the material, the form, and the technique. In (figures 10, 11, and 12) these principles have been best utilized.

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout work on this problem the analyst has made a particular effort to relate jewelry and the results achieved, not only toward free expression of the artist's personality, but towards techniques and methods readily adaptable to the school situation. It was found that best results were achieved when the intrinsic qualities of the material and the most freedom of design were employed. The investigator feels that while delicate intricacies involving expert craftsmanship are extremely effective, equally as much aesthetic pleasure can be derived from executing and viewing work that is of a more spontaneous nature and less controlled by the bounds imposed by excessive emphasis upon pure craftsmanship. As a teacher this
study has proven most successful in that through the work done on (figures 6 through 12) the writer believes that the methods employed will enable young students to produce effective, well executed jewelry rapidly enough to hold their interest, without possessing the faculties of an expert craftsman.
Figure 4
Figure 5
Figure 6