

Jackie Simmonds – painter/writer/enameller

I am an award-winning artist, a full Signature Member of the Pastel Society of America, and have painted and taught painting for many years. I have won an award from the UK Pastel Society, and took first prize in the Chevron Art in Nature competition. I have written 7 art instruction books, and my paintings have been reprinted and distributed worldwide.

I was fascinated by a glowing, small enamelled bowl that I spotted at a major art fair two years ago, it seemed to be lit from within. I tracked down the maker of the bowl, who was the Chairman of the British Society of Enamellers, and have since enjoyed tuition from her in order to learn how to work with enamels. I now work from home, having added a kiln to my art studio equipment!

Enamelling on copper is a little like alchemy, given the transformations which take place in the kiln...and for me, after working for many years as a painter, it is not dissimilar to working with colour in paint, since layers of enamel are applied so that colours mix and blend in interesting ways, opaque and transparent colours need to work together, and a good understanding and feel for colour is essential for success. Enamel colours can be subtle, they can be rich, and are always exciting to work with. My designs and surfaces have a flow just like a freely painted surface, patterns are achieved freehand and interesting changes occur in the kiln according to the firing temperatures and time – “high-firing” is a technique I frequently use to achieve unusual effects. Many layers – and re-visits to the kiln - are needed to achieve the depth of colour and beautiful glowing effects to be found on these special little bowls and dishes, no two of which are ever the same.

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