

Mastering Torch-Fired Enamel Jewelry

the next steps in
painting with fire

Bonus Projects

BARBARA LEWIS



NORTH LIGHT BOOKS

Cincinnati, Ohio

CreateMixedMedia.com

Effervescent Reflection



This pendant looks as if they was made with more costly materials, such as fine silver foil, when, in fact, it's inexpensive mica that gives the bling! Mica does not burn, but remains stable and unchanged. Don't be fooled by plastic glitter or by German glitter. When fired, the first will be a sticky mess and the other will melt! Simply make sure that your jar of "fairy dust" is labeled "mica!"

Materials

Enameling Tools

basic torch-fired enameling kit
(the size of the mandrel for this project should be as close as possible to the size of the hole in the disc)

80 Mesh Enamel

1410 Robin's Egg
2030 Medium Fusing Clear
2305 Nile Green

6/20 Enamel

2410 Copper
2305 Nile Green

Metalworking Tools

round-nose pliers
chain-nose pliers
wire cutters
needle files
dapping block and punch
brass mallet
hole punch

Other Materials and Findings

1 ¼ " copper discs with hole already in place (or you can punch a hole if you like)
mica flakes
6mm x 4mm faceted aquamarine briolettes (3)
24-gauge fine silver head pin
8mm silver jump ring



1 Anneal the disc.



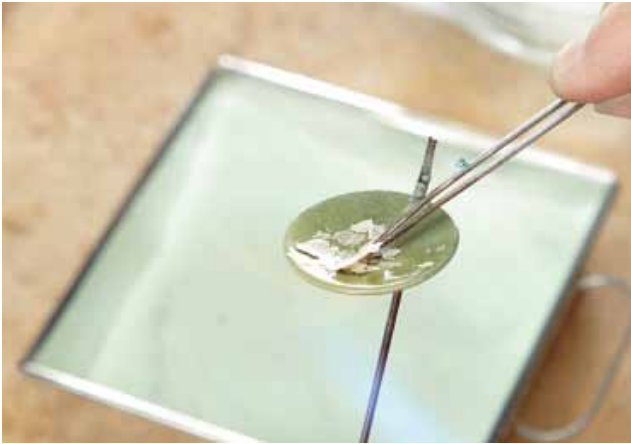
2 Quench the disc, and dry.



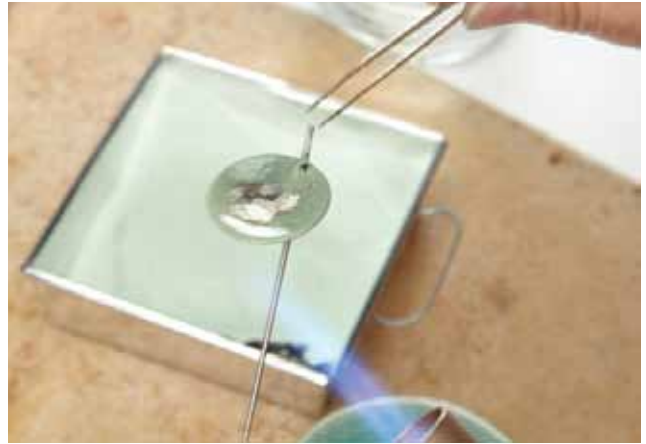
3 Using a wooden dapping block, dap the disc for a gentle curve.



4 Place the disc on the mandrel (with the concave side facing out or away from your hand). In this case the mandrel should be as close in size to the size of the hole in the disc as possible. Enamel the disc in two to three layers of Robin's Egg. You may want to pull the bead a little closer to the end of the mandrel.



5 While the enamel is still hot, tilt the mandrel so the concave side of the bead is positioned like a cup. Use tweezers to place several flakes of mica in the center of the disc and press the mica into the enamel.



6 Apply three layers of Nile Green enamel so that the mica is completely covered but shines through the enamel.



7 While heating the bead from beneath, use tweezers to place several pieces of Nile Green and Copper 6/20 enamel into the center of the disc.



8 Gently fire.



9 When the 6/20 appears to slump slightly, tilt the piece so that the flame is directed at the 6/20.

TORCH-FIRED TIP

If you continue to fire from beneath the pendant, the 6/20 enamel will melt and become smooth. To keep the 6/20 raised, you must direct the flame to the topside. Fire long enough from the underside to fuse the enamel and then go topside.



10 Remove the bead from the mandrel. Allow it to cool.



11 Thread the head pin from the front to the back of the bead. Wrap the head part of the pin around the wire.



12 Thread three briolettes onto the wire and create a wire wrapped loop.



13 Add to a chain to the loop with a jump ring.

Innocence (variation on Forest Nymph)



Materials

Enameling Tools

basic torch-fired enameling kit
medium sifter

80 Mesh Enamels

1910 Tallow
2810 Geranium

Metalworking Tools

round-nose pliers
chain-nose pliers
wire cutters
hole punch
rubber bench block
permanent marker
chasing hammer
metal bench block
cross-locking pliers

Other Materials and Findings

22-gauge fine silver wire
22-gauge sterling wire
24-gauge sterling wire
30-gauge copper sheet metal
3mm sterling jump rings
8mm sterling jump rings
2mm x 3mm link sterling chain
clasp, sterling magnetic

Even though this piece is a version of *Forest Nymph*, it makes a much quieter statement. In fact, it's the necklace I made for my daughter to wear at her wedding. It illustrates that enamel jewelry doesn't always have to be a riot of color, although the enamel colors make that very tempting!



1 Create four flowers in varying sizes, following the instructions in the *Forest Nymph* project.



2 Dredge one of the flowers in 1910 Tallow, opaque.



3 Fire the flower. Repeat steps 2 and 3 several times.



4 Add sifted accents of 2810 Geranium, transparent onto the flower. Fire.



5 Remove the flower from the mandrel. Repeat steps 2 through 5 for each of the four flowers.



7 Cut 5" of 22-gauge fine silver wire. Hold the end of the wire with cross-locking pliers. Dangle the end of the wire in the flame of a torch to melt the end of the wire and create a head pin.

METALWORKING TIP

Fine silver wire makes gorgeous, smooth head pins. Head pins made with sterling silver wire tend to be dimpled because there is copper in the wire.



8 Stack the enamel flowers on the head pin.



9 Create a wire-wrapped loop on the back of the flower. Trim any excess wire.



10 Use a 3mm jump ring to attach the flower cluster to 16" of silver chain. Use 8mm jump rings to attach a magnetic clasp to each end of the chain.



11 Create two pearl dangles by creating head pins from two 3" pieces of 24-gauge wire. Thread a pearl onto each of two head pin wires. (Follow the directions above creating head pins.) Cut 2½" of sterling chain. Slide the chain onto one of the head pin wires and wrap to secure.



12 Use a 4mm jump ring to attach the pearl chain to the wire wrap at the back of the flower cluster. Use a 4mm jump ring to attach the other dangle to the chain just above the flower.

Bonus Pin Project



Materials

Enameling Tools

basic torch-fired enameling kit
medium sifter

Enamels

white liquid enamel, clear form
1055 White
1410 Robin's Egg
1830 Marigold
1860 Flame Orange
2680 Prussian Blue
2836 Raspberry
2215 Egg Yellow

Metalworking Tools

round-nose pliers
chain-nose pliers
wire cutters
metal shears
soft artist's paintbrush
needle files
rubber bench block
chasing hammer
Eugenia Chan Hole Punch
riveting tool

Other Materials and Findings

24-gauge copper sheet
24-gauge dead soft sterling wire
1½" pin-back with at least two holes
horsehair
beading tweezers
eyelets



1 Use metal shears to cut an irregular oval (about $1\frac{3}{4}$ " \times $1\frac{1}{2}$ " [45mm \times 38mm]) from sheet copper. Anneal the metal, quench and dry.



2 Lay the pin finding on the metal to use as a guide for hole placement. Mark and punch two $\frac{3}{32}$ " holes.



3 Lay the pendant on a rubber bench block and start hammering the metal with the ball peen end of a chasing hammer. The metal will cup upward. Recheck the fit of the pin finding.



4 Enamel the metal in 1055 White.



5 Enamel one-third of the pendant in Marigold.



6 Sift Flame Orange down the center of the pendant and Prussian Blue on the edge. Heat the pendant from beneath for a few seconds to partially fuse the enamel before moving the flame topside. Fire the pendant to maturity and then remove it from the mandrel.

TORCH-FIRED TIP



This piece is a good example of a piece which may have enamel build up on the mandrel. If needed, use pliers to gently crack the excess enamel off the mandrel.



7 Your piece should look like this after cooling.



8 Dip the metal into liquid enamel. Allow some of the excess to drain off while still maintaining good coverage.



9 Sift Egg Yellow, Raspberry and Robin's Egg enamels in patches on top of the wet liquid enamel.



10 Allow the piece to dry for several minutes. Take the end of a mandrel or other sharp instrument and draw through the enamel.



11 Fire the pendant very gently to allow the water to evaporate from the liquid enamel and to gently warm the base enamel. Cool.



12 Attach the pin back to the pendant with a riveting tool.



13 Bind horsehair with sterling wire and then lash it to the pendant through eyelets.

METALWORKING TIP

Clean punched holes with a diamond bead reamer if necessary. If the holes are too big and you find the eyelets being pulled through the holes, you can add washers.