

DISCUSSION GROUP

Experts' Meeting on Enamel on Metal Conservation – New York, 2010

The Frick Collection • ICOM-CC – Ceramics and Glass & Metals WGs – Enamel Group

The aim:

To expand and attempt a summary of current knowledge on conservation and analysis of enamels, by creating an open forum for discussion related to key questions.

Panel Participants

Beatrice Beillard; Isabelle Biron; Pete Dandridge; Terry Drayman-Weisser; Mark Wypyski;
Facilitator – Agnès Gall; Secretary – Julia Day

Organization:

The following topics are circulated in advance of the meeting, so that participants will have a chance to consider the questions.

Begin discussion with a synopsis of relevant papers from the ICOM-CC Glass & Ceramic Meeting.

Follow with specific questions, which will be read aloud allowing an open forum for people to express their thoughts and concerns.

PowerPoint presentation will also be made to help facilitate discussion during the meeting. *We hope that delegates can email images that illustrate issues related to the topics listed below. All images should be emailed to Julia Day using the following address:*
<http://dropbox.yousendit.com/Frick>

There will be 20 minutes for each topic with a total of 90 minutes for discussion.

Allow 15 minutes at end of discussion to create list of high priority research projects.

Key points of discussion will be documented and the text sent to delegates for comments and suggestions.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

PART I

I. Analyses

List the analyses useful for enamels in general, and unstable enamels in particular.

Why are these particular analyses useful?

What type of information is gained when using methods with and without sampling, i.e. non-destructive versus destructive analysis.

How to collect samples?

What information does the scientist need with the sample?

What information is gained depending on sample location (e.g. flake vs. cross-section)?

Was there a reason for the apparent change in enamel composition in the 16th c.?

Is there a consensus on the analysis of glass composition related to specific periods or geography or both?

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PART II

Environmental and treatment concerns were briefly discussed at the last meeting in Rome the following is a brief synopsis: There was a difference in opinion on the recommended RH to store deteriorated enamels. A need for information on exhibition and storage materials was also expressed. The issue of deteriorated glass was discussed, and many questions arose. The thesis of Laurianne Robinet was quoted during the discussion as a good bibliographical reference for this subject (see <http://hdl.handle.net/1842/1475>) as well as the Concise Bibliography on the Technology, Deterioration and Conservation of Enamels on Metal (see <http://www.icom-cc.org/10/documents?catId=9&subId=170>).

2. Environmental conditions for display and storage of unstable enamels

What is the driving reaction for this deterioration?

Recommended RH and Temperature?

Does air circulation help?

Maximum fluctuations and what happens when these are not followed?

Do light levels matter and why?

How to light enamels on display, especially crizzled, but also other crazed enamels not necessarily unstable (e.g. plique-à-jour). (Definition of crazing versus crizzling.)

Methods to measure display and storage conditions (local, visual, telemetry, etc). Quality and results versus budget.

3. Cleaning unstable enamels (glass and metal deteriorated)

At what point is it important to remove the alkali?

How to clean the surface of:

- Enamels presenting an incipient deterioration of the glass?
- Enamels presenting very crizzled or shattered glass surfaces?
- Enamels presenting a metal with active corrosion?

What solvents are used and what methods to apply?

What are the mechanical and chemical consequences of the application of liquids (solvents) to crizzled enamel (e.g. with acetone)?

Do light levels matter and why?

Which materials should be avoided with crizzled enamels?

Is washing appropriate in any instance?

4. How to handle surface coatings found on unstable enamels

Is use of resins or varnishes over enamels common, how widespread was this practice?

What is the function of this coatings (protection, consolidation, aesthetic)?

What are the types of coatings people have observed or identified?

Are metal lacquers found over enamels, e.g. Limoges painted enamel plaques, when there isn't a metal surround?

How to remove the coatings, from slightly crizzled, very crizzled, or shattered enamel?

How to avoid/minimize dissolving the coatings into cracks?

What is happening or will happen if the lacquer is not removed (through breakdown of the material or cross-linking)?