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CRAFT REVIVAL

Behind the craft

Naomi Jones talks to Janine Partington about her enamelled wall hangings

Have you always been artistic?

Having creative parents (my father, Enos Lovatt, is a painter, my mother a former potter) seemed to make producing things inevitable. As a small child I was fond of messing around with paints, pens and paper. However, I worked in a museum after university, and largely ignored my artistic impulses until my 30s when I discovered enamelling.

How did that come about?

After the birth of my second baby, I craved time out from my everyday life. My husband – a lecturer at the School of Art, Media and Design at UWE Bristol – suggested enamelling, which he also practises from time to time. I enrolled in an evening course at Filton College in Bristol where I was lucky enough to have excellent facilities and a very patient teacher. After three years of classes I bought my own kiln, and in 2006 I became a full-time enameller.

Can you describe the making process?

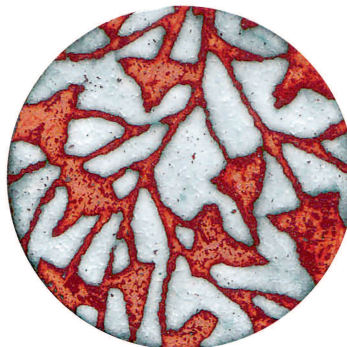
Enamelling is the art of fusing glass on to metal, such as copper, which is what I use; the resulting object is strong, durable, impervious and colourfast. I use this technique to create wall panels (as well as jewellery) that can be displayed in any room, even a kitchen or bathroom.

What inspires your designs?

Nature, in all its guises; I translate the forms of seed heads, trees and flowers into fresh, clean designs.

Where is your workshop?

My studio is literally the heart of my home; being in the house allows me to keep track of the family while I work




long hours. It's pretty cramped, though, so it's a constant juggling act: managing the piles of boxes, frames, enamels and other paraphernalia associated with my craft.

Which artists do you most admire?

On a personal level, it has to be my father; he embodies what I think of as an artist with his skill, passion, imagination and intensity. Outside of my family, there are many artists and makers whose work I respect and covet: David Hockney's Yorkshire landscapes; Gordon Baldwin's beautiful sculptural ceramics; and Lucy Casson's cartoon-like tin figures.

What advice would you give other busy mothers?

Be creative in everything you do, and don't wait until you have the time – do it now – it can only enrich your life.  Janine will be exhibiting during week two of Origin at Somerset House (stand E4), London, in October; see craftscouncil.org.uk for details. Alternatively, contact Janine on 07742 740642 or visit janinepartington.co.uk.



TOP Janine's small workshop is in the middle of her house

ABOVE One of her panels, just out of the kiln

ABOVE LEFT The patterns

can make pretty brooches

BELOW LEFT Each of Janine's

designs are one-offs, such

as this monochrome piece;

they cost from £40 for a panel,

and from £15 for jewellery

BELOW MIDDLE This tree

design has an autumnal feel

BELOW A reversed-out

flower head pattern in black

and white is striking

PHOTOGRAPH BY MATTHEW PARTINGTON



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