

Workshop at Yamawaki Art College, Tokyo, Japan

By Barbara McFadyen

In October 2018, I was invited to teach a workshop on enameling at Yamawaki Art College in Tokyo, Japan by the head of the jewelry department, Mrs. Tominaga. The current enameling teacher at Yamawaki teaches traditional techniques of Cloisonné and Champlevé and she and the students were interested in learning other western non-traditional techniques.



The emphasis of the workshop focused on painting and drawing techniques with underglaze pencils, graphite pencils, and underglaze crayons. I also demonstrated 'fine line drawing with P-3 and crowquill pens, as well as gold and silver Gelly Roll pens. Over the course of the two days, I also demonstrated the use of waterslide decal transfers; both sepia iron oxide decals and commercial color and black & white. The students had a great time experimenting with all of these techniques on the pre-enamelled porcelain steel plates. For a top coat we used Ninomiya N-1 to cover the underglaze materials.



For the second day of the workshop, I introduced China painting, which allowed the students another method of adding color and detail to their pieces. This was a big hit, but it was a bit of a challenge to have all the students try their hand at the china painting as there were 40 students in the class! In the end it was accomplished by laying out one color on a smooth tile for each of the 13 colors in the China paint set I had prepared and brought with me.

I was able to have notes translated ahead of time by a Japanese metalsmith friend (and past student from a class I had taught at Penland), so although most students didn't speak English, they had fully translated technical notes by their side.

It was really a joy to see everyone so excited as they were trying the new techniques and the smiles on the students faces over their final pieces. Overall, I loved my time in Japan and it was an honor to be invited to share enameling techniques with students and teachers alike.



I brought information on The Enamelist Society, newsletters, and Alchemy Exhibition catalogues to share, so hopefully we will have new members in The Enamelist Society across the sea!