

Inspiration for 2012

Not quite for you to organise something on your own? Members of a guild or group can easily work together to organise something that can be promoted under the Craft and Design Month banner - this year the Guild of Enamellers did exactly that!

Enamel Fusion

The Guild of Enamellers event, Enamel Fusion, was designed to dovetail with Craft and Design Month in May this year and was coordinated by Guild member, Rachel Gogerly.

It was great to see 20 Guild members taking part in 15 separate events across the country and, with the first one under their belts, the Guild is hopeful that more members will participate in 2012.

So how did it all come about? Did it take ages to organise? Was it costly? Well, the answer's 'no' to each of those questions really.

"Once the idea was agreed by the Guild Executive Committee in February, I set about contacting as many members as possible to find out who could hold an event of their own or who was already doing something that could be linked to the initiative," explains Rachel.

Then, as word spread, she began compiling a list of all the enamel events being held by Guild members around the country. "The range of events organised was varied, but most involved demonstrations or hands-on practical classes of some kind," she says.

Next she wrote a press release which was posted on the Guild website, along with details of all the members' events and contact details for each one. The information was then listed free of charge on the Craft and Design Month website. *(There are free downloads to help you write and distribute Press Release at www.craftanddesignmonth.net/downloads).*

Rachel continues, "Apart from the information on the Guild's own website and in its Journal, the only publicity the Guild used for Enamel Fusion was the Craft and Design Month website, which was all free. So no promotional costs were incurred to the Guild aside of members' time."

In addition to the Guild's main marketing, individual members did their own promotion for their events, either through editorial or ads in local press, flyers locally and/or features on their own websites.

With 2012 looming and with more time this year to organise events, many Guild members feel that more and better publicity could probably be achieved, enabling more people to 'discover' enamelling - which is what it's all about really! www.guildofenamellers.org



Enamel Fusion Open Studio with Bonnie Mackintosh, Linda Connelly and Lesley Miller (pictured).



Student at work at one of Rachel Gogerly's Enamel Fusion classes



Images of a silver sample piece cooling down (l to r) showing how much the colour changes in the process

"Through Craft and Design Month we want spread the word about British craftsmanship and encourage everyone to support our great British makers."

Britain has a tradition of skill and talent in design and making that is respected worldwide. The idea behind Craft & Design Month is that for one whole month we celebrate that creativity across the nation - and shout out loud that design and making in the UK is *not* dead, far from it! It's alive, and being kept alive, by the initiative and dedication of everyone working in the British craft industry today, be it the designer makers themselves, event organisers, gallery owners, course organisers....

Craft & Design Month gives everyone the opportunity to raise awareness of their work and businesses on a local basis, to establish a market for their work in their own region - and it doesn't need to cost anyone very much at all!

We listed over 700 events taking place during May 2011 on our Craft & Design Month website this year; some were organised specially for the project, others linked in with it to enhance the promotion of events that were already due to take place. Craft Fairs, Workshops, Courses, Markets, Demonstrations, Gallery Exhibitions, Open Studios... there was something going on almost all over the UK during the first ever national Craft and Design Month!

So we hope the reports featured here about Ceramics in Charnwood and the Guild of Enamellers will inspire people to get together and organise their own events for Craft & Design Month May 2012. There are lots of free downloads to help with promotion at www.craftanddesignmonth.net and we'll be adding more to the website soon.

With the Bank Holiday break coming in early June next year, we can see that Craft & Design Month May 2012 might well evolve into becoming 'Craft & Design Month-and-a-bit'!

Keep an eye on the website for up to date details of Craft & Design Month 2012.

www.craftanddesignmonth.net