

PLATINUM – by Heather Taylor WA

Liquid Bright Platinum and palladium are substitutes for silver in porcelain decoration. Although silver can be applied to a porcelain glaze as a lustre, it tarnishes and requires regular polishing to keep it bright.

Platinum and Palladium will not tarnish. However, these metallic lustres are not as “silvery white” in colour as pure silver and tend to resemble bright chrome when fired.

The dark appearance of Platinum has made it less popular than LB Gold. On average 100 phials of LB Gold are used to one phial of platinum and sadly this is often due to the way platinum is fired.

LB Gold is very forgiving. It will fire bright gold on any glazed or semi glazed surface as low as 700 degC and as high as 800deg C. In fact even higher in some cases without noticeable loss of colour. Platinum however becomes darker the higher it is fired. At between 680degC and 720deg C platinum fires a bright silver colour. When fired to 800 degC platinum is a chrome colour and large areas take on a dark appearance. Tragically many pieces that have been decorated with platinum have been overfired.

Apply Platinum in the last firing. Fire 700-720 deg C. NO HIGHER.

Platinum can be applied over any fired white relief product such as Texture Coat, Texture Paste, White Raised Paste and Enamel. Make sure the surface of the fired relief is glossy and has been fired to full maturity at between 800-820 deg C. Apply the platinum over the raised enamel work and fire to 700degC only. Fire any higher and the platinum will soak into the relief and spoil.

Lustre is most effective applied over fired platinum and the best effects are achieved with highly iridescent lustres such as Mother of Pearl, Avocado Green, Irid Bright Yellow etc.

WHITE GOLD can be created by first applying a coat of 12% LB Gold and after firing cover with Platinum. Fire 700-720deg C.

Trimming a piece with LB Gold definitely adds a warm touch and painters will continue to choose gold rather than platinum as a finish. However, a thin band of platinum placed alongside a band of gold creates a stunning contrast and when platinum and gold are used together in a design the effects are quite dramatic. Add into this equation some textured gold and platinum (applied over white relief), areas of metallic paint in gold, bronze, copper and silver, areas of lustre such as Mother of Pearl and Copper and you have a spectacular combination of metallic colours.