



CASE STUDY

WEST MIDLANDS TECHNOLOGY NETWORK

VERY COLOURFUL JEWELLERY

Very Colourful Jewellery based in Birmingham's famous Jewellery Quarter explores new art form with support from West Midlands Technology Network (WMTN) and the Jewellery Industry Innovation Centre (JIIC), Birmingham City University.

Michael Peckitt is an artist and designer of acrylic and anodised aluminium jewellery. He set up his company, Very Colourful Jewellery, in 2004 and currently supplies some 160 outlets across the UK.

Using his training in fine art painting, Michael's work brings his liking for colour and form into a size that works as fashion jewellery. Clear acrylic sheet has been painted in acrylic layers over time with the addition of gold and silver leaf. The aluminium is anodised to accept dyes. It is then painted in special vegetable dye and sealed so the colour is permanently fixed. The result – jewellery with attitude!



THE PROBLEM

Michael wished to explore the development of a new art form in anodised aluminium using reticulation - the heating of the anodised but untouched metal which distorts the surface with lines and undulations.

He wanted to improve both his knowledge and skills in working with anodised aluminium and explore further techniques which would give not only a vibrant colour pallet, but also texture to his work.

THE SOLUTION

With funding from the WMTN, JIIC assisted Michael with supported access to their anodising facility and their surface finishing expertise. This helped Michael develop his knowledge and inspired him to explore anodised textures. Further co-operation and a long-term relationship with the JIIC has been established, Michael said "I hope that there will be further opportunities to experiment using JIIC's facilities. Without this support it would have been hard to make progress due to the limited facilities in my own workshop."

THE RESULTS

Michael's new fine artwork has been produced, sold and exhibited.

The company's new interactive website is ideal for those who know about Michael's work but are unable to source it locally. The website has enabled the development of a retail business and in reaching overseas markets especially in the USA, Germany and Italy. The work is now in several galleries including the Museum of Art Gallery shop in Philadelphia, USA.

JIIC put Michael's work forward for the European Aluminium Competition 2006 in Germany.

