



SFDAV

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The Society of Folk & Decorative Artists of Victoria Inc.



FOLK ART STYLES ~ Wismut

The use of the metallic element Wismut (bismuth) in decorative painting has been traced back to 15th century Germany and Switzerland, where it was used as a less expensive substitute for silver and gold. This type of painting involved; undercoating the surface with ground chalk, spreading with Wismut powder and then polishing with an agate stone to achieve a shining silver metallic finish. (This could be altered to a simulated gold finish with a thin yellow varnish.) The piece was then heavily decorated with colourful motifs over the Wismut base coat, which gleamed between the design elements.



Popular motifs were large and small stylised flowers and blossoms, berries, and symbols of love and faithfulness such as hearts and linked hands. Some objects were painted with a couple or a mother and children surrounded by the typical flowers. Only a few early examples have survived and these can be seen in museums.