

Selhamin Poliment

Burnishing Clay

Premixed



MAY 1996

Selhamin Poliment is a natural product that is part of the traditional water gilding system with gold and silver leaf. It is available in red, yellow, blue, black, gray and white, in one kilogram plastic containers. The premixed material is similar to the traditional dry cone burnishing clay, but is packaged in paste form eliminating the need to crush and dissolve the clay. It does not contain any binder. There are many methods of working with **Selhamin Poliment** and one of the most popular methods for using this product is listed below.

Selhamin Poliment burnishing clay is applied over a properly prepared gesso covered surface. The clay needs to be mixed with glue and water needs to be added. The formula below provides approximate ratios by volume for preparing the clay mixture.

Selhamin Poliment premixed clay - approx. 60%
Good quality rabbit skin glue solution - approx. 2.5 - 3%
Additional water - approx. 37%

The rabbit skin glue solution is prepared using the traditional method of dissolving the glue in water. Sheets or granular material are placed in water and heated to below the boiling point until the glue dissolves completely.

The warm glue solution is mixed with the **Selhamin Poliment** clay and the additional water. After the material is thoroughly combined and the solution is consistent, the mixture is pushed through cheesecloth to remove any solid particles.

Several layers of the clay mixture should be applied to the gesso covered surface. Two to four layers will provide a good base for gold or silver leaf. Different colors of clay may be applied to create different tones in the leaf. Allow the layers of clay to dry completely.

A bole polishing brush or horsehair cloth may also be used to smooth the surface. The clay surface may also be smoothed with a soft cloth which has been dampened with a half water and half alcohol solution. When using the wet polishing methods, use care to avoid removing too much material.

Gold or silver leaf is applied with a gilder's liquor on the smooth clay surface. The traditional mixture for the gilder's liquor includes water, alcohol and a few drops of dissolved animal glue or gelatin. After some hours of drying, the gold or silver leaf is ready to be polished with an agate burnisher.