

Ilse Mühlbacher Biedermeier revived - Artist Micheline de Bellefroid
and the Invention of Kromekote Papers

From 1966 to 1987 Micheline de Bellefroid (1927-2008) was head of the bookbinding section of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Visuels (ENSAV) in Brussels, usually known as La Cambre. She and her predecessors Jules-Karl Van West and Vladimir Tchékéroul influenced several generations of bookbinders and it is due to their teaching that Belgian bookbinding is still held in such worldwide esteem. Micheline de Bellefroid was renowned for her use of decorated Kromekote paper for wrappers, slipcases and end papers. Inspired by the glossy decorated papers of the Biedermeier period, and her desire to produce more contemporary designs she discovered Chromolux paper and developed a method for treating and coloring the sheets without altering the polished surface. This sophisticated and original process was to enhance the technical perfection of her morocco leather bindings.

Keywords: decorated paper, Kromekote, Biedermeier