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HOUSE of KOLOR KOSMIC KROME® REVIEWED BY CRAIG FRASER



» TESTING THE NEW KOSMIC KROME PAINTS FROM HOUSE OF KOLOR

*TEST BENCH IS NOT SUPPORTED, SPONSORED, OR INFLUENCED BY ADVERTISERS AND MANUFACTURERS.

House of Kolor recently threw their hat into the ring of aluminum-pigmented paints by launching their Kosmic Krome® paint line. We were very excited to test Kosmic Krome®. While many metallic paints out there use aluminum pigments for coloring, there is a major difference between the standard pigmented paints and the micro-pigmented systems. The aluminum in Kosmic Krome® is composed of micro-platelets of 6061 T-6 aluminum. These platelets are so small that they can mimic a high-shine aluminum finish with only one layer over a polished surface.

Among other very cool effects you can create with Kosmic Krome® are brushed-steel (just scuff the surface with a Scotchbrite® pad and apply the paint!), machine turned aluminum panel (cut a round piece of a Scotchbrite® pad, and apply it to a grinder), and many more. The machine-turned grinds seem to practically jump off the surface after applying the Kosmic Krome®. Because these pigments are so fine, you have to be really careful about the surface they're painted on. I was blown away by how Kosmic Krome® stacked up against the competition, and in many ways flexed its superiority. Because aluminum-pigmented colors are the new frontier in kustom painting (and other art applications, by the way) artists are afforded a tremendous opportunity

to innovate and raise the creative bar.

The Kosmic Krome® line features five different flavors: MCC-00 Mirror Reflective Effect, MCC-01 Aluminum Effect, MCC-02 Copper Effect, MCC-03 Bronze Effect, MCC-04 Gold Effect, first obvious advantage to Kosmic Krome® is that it boasts three more colors than its competitors. That's very cool. As with the other aluminum-pigmented paint brands, Kosmic Krome® is pre-reduced and ready to spray—just shake it and shoot.

WHAT GRADES DID WE GIVE THE KOSMIC KROME MCC PAINT SYSTEM?

COLOR/LOOKS: A

[Copper Effect suffered slightly]

INNOVATIVE GOODIES: A+

SPRAYABILITY: A+

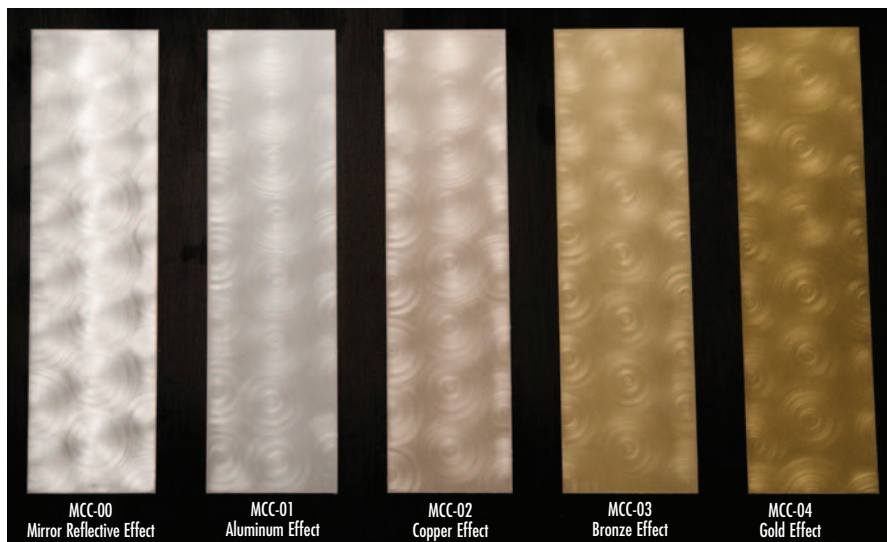
[Sprays great, but dries slower than the competition]

DURABILITY A

EASE OF APPLICATION B+

COST: A+

[These guys came in 50% lower than the competition!]



// IS IT METAL OR IS IT PAINT???

One important difference between Kosmic Krome® and competing brands is that it contains no alcohol. The up-side of alcohol-based paint is that it dries faster, but the down-side is that it cures more slowly due to its water content. Although Kosmic Krome® sprays extremely well through airbrushes and touch-up guns, you must layer coats more slowly than with Alsa's Mirrachrome and Ghostchrome paints because it's slower drying. If you apply too much Kosmic Krome® at once, you can trap solvents and cause blushing (a dulling of the surface), so be careful.

I tested the MCC-00 Mirror Reflective color first. For ideal results, I discovered that Mirror Reflective is best applied in thin layers over a perfectly polished and clearcoated—not waxed!—black surface because the platelets align evenly enough to mimic polished aluminum. The key is the adhesion, and Kosmic Krome® actually bonded better than Mirrachrome.

Regarding clearcoating, the solvents in clearcoats have a tendency to dull the shine of the aluminum. Allow Mirror Reflective to cure for at least 12 hours before using a fast-drying, low-solvent clear. I recommend applying two medium coats of catalyzed clear, let



cure overnight, and then Scotchbrite® and add as many wet coats as you wish. Using this method, a protective barrier is established between the wet clear and your shiny aluminum. We experienced great results with House of Kolor's UC-35 fast-drying clearcoat. I also prefer to perform this effect on either small panels or integrated into graphics. Trying to chrome an entire car or a hood is not only a little overkill, but it tends to look streaky and blotchy.

Happy with the Mirror Reflective, I then tried the MCC-01 Aluminum Effect. Comparing this to Alsa's Ghostchrome, I was very impressed. Ghostchrome has always been my favorite, and both of these ran neck and neck in terms of sprayability, ease of use, and killer look. Ghostchrome does dry faster, but only by a few seconds to a minute. A big difference I noticed between the two brands is that with Kosmic Krome's® Aluminum Effect, I was able to completely cover a red background—in three to four coats the red was absolutely gone! Aluminum Effect covers fast,

The MCC-02 Copper Effect, MCC-03 Bronze Effect, and the MCC-04 Gold Effect performed similarly to the Aluminum Effect. The Mirror Effect is produced with a different binder (same pigment, though) designed to adhere better to a polished surface versus a sanded surface. I tried all of the Kosmic Kromes® using a similar panel with a machine-turned effect created by a Scotchbrite™ pad on my die grinder. They were also all tested on a clearcoated black surface. At first, the MCC-02 Copper looked very close to the Aluminum until the third or fourth coat, when it emerged as a pinkish copper patina; not the shiny penny look I expected, but it was still very cool looking. The MCC-03 Bronze jumped off differently right away offering a very dark, rich, and almost aged brass look to it. I definitely see this as being a killer color for a set of flames on a black or metallic gold surface. The MCC-04 Gold Effect definitely stands out in the crowd. Literally, this brilliant color looks like

jeweled gold-leaf when sprayed over a machine-turned texture or surface. Very impressive, and I know I'm going to get a lot of use with this stuff!

House of Kolor really did their homework. The Kosmic Krome® line was well thought out and finely engineered, and, except for the Copper Effect, these colors exceeded my expectations. House of Kolor improved on the sprayability and adhesion without sacrificing the over-

all finish and effect. HOK also deserves high marks for instructions that are easy to understand and well presented. And with their disclaimers-gone-wild, HOK definitely does not want you to think that you can chrome everything with perfect results.

Overall, we highly recommend Kosmic Krome® for new and veteran painters of chrome colors. Obviously, House of Kolor spared no expense improving on the concept and launching the largest selection of micro-pigment metallics available. But wait, folks, there's more! Kosmic Krome is half the cost of the competition!

So, call your local HOK jobber and order a few cans to play with. At \$46 per 8-ounce can, you can't afford not to get it.

Give it a try and please feel free to e-mail your opinions to ceo@airbrushaction.com, Subject: Airbrush Action Test Bench. If you have any other products you would like to see tested, let us know and we'll run them through the wringer. Keep on painting. ✨



THE MCC-04 GOLD EFFECT DEFINITELY STANDS OUT IN THE CROWD. LITERALLY, THIS BRILLIANT COLOR LOOKS LIKE JEWELLED GOLD-LEAF WHEN SPRAYED OVER A MACHINE-TURNED TEXTURE OR SURFACE..."

adheres very well, and it can even handle some minor taping (if your job requires serious taping, I urge you to protect it with a couple of coats of House of Kolor SG-100 intercoat clear. Caution: be sure that the MCC-01 is fully cured before you apply the SG-100, and make double sure that the SG-100 is cured before you apply tape to it).



HOUSE OF KOLOR®

House of Kolor®, with the help of custom airbrush artist Craig Fraser and Airbrush Action, has developed the ultimate DVD on how to use this incredible new technology. In this new DVD, you'll learn step-by-step instruction on flat and curved metal surfaces using a spraygun and airbrush; proper health and regulatory information, the latest technical data, and several artistic tips and tricks.

Get your copy at any House of Kolor® jobber store or online www.houseofkolor.com.

Kosmic Krome® DVD (HOK46306)



KOSMIC KROME®

PERFECTED AFTER YEARS OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT,

Kosmic Krome® is your best choice for simulated plated & chrome like finish on metal, wood, plastic, and just about any other substrate! House of Kolor® introduces this incredible new paint system. Kosmic Krome's palette includes:

- Aluminum Effect (MC01)
- Copper Effect (MC02)
- Bronze Effect (MC03)
- Gold Effect (MC04)
- Mirror Reflective Effect (MC00)



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