



Featured Chemist: Hermenegildo "Gil" Mislang
Dunn-Edwards Corporation, Los Angeles, California

In honor of the National Chemistry Week theme, "Your Home—It's All Built on Chemistry," I decided to make a trip to visit a chemist that helps make our homes more colorful! I traveled all the way to Los Angeles, California, where I met Hermenegildo "Gil" Mislang. Mr. Mislang works for Dunn-Edwards Corporation, a paint manufacturer!

On the way to Mr. Mislang's company, I asked him to tell me a little more about his job and what I should expect to see in his laboratory. He told me he mixes chemicals together to make paint products. These are used to protect surfaces on homes and buildings and to give them color. He also finds ways to make paint products

work better, and tries to make them with chemicals that are friendlier and safer to people, the environment and also make them more colorful!

When I got to the laboratory, Mr. Mislang introduced me to many of his co-workers. The first thing I did was ask to help with making a batch of paint! Mr. Mislang let me go in the lab with Inna Shchors and Hai Nguyen. They showed me how they make a very small batch of paint in the lab. My favorite part was when they used the mixer to blend the paint. I loved to see how the colors mixed to make new ones! Mr. Mislang explained that children everywhere are touched by the work that he does. Many toys today and even the paint in bedrooms of boys and girls is bright and colorful as well as safe from the research done in laboratories like Mr. Mislang's. A child would come into contact with products that he helps make on the walls of their own homes, because their homes are all built on chemistry!

Mr. Mislang told me he first got interested in science from reading science fiction comics and books. He also liked to watch science fiction movies. When he was young he liked to do many science experiments.

Some of these included color changes of liquids, fermentation, three states of matter (solid, liquid and gas), temperature, and about how heat and fire affect materials. His parents and teachers also encouraged him to do science projects when he was young. One thing he learned was how food could be preserved with salt and other chemicals. In school, he enjoyed the experiments that he got to try out in science class. He said it was the "curiosity" that made him go into science as a career.

In Mr. Mislang's lab, most of the work is in research and development. They have a lot of equipment that they use



Meg with Gil Mislang talking about ingredients in paints.



Meg with Chemist Hai Nguyen talking about making paint with a disperser.





to make small amounts of paint, as I saw earlier with Romy and Hai. They also use equipment that tests paint and equipment that adds colorants to paint to make thousands of different colors. Next, I got to see some of the testing that is done with the paint once they have made it. Mr. Mislant brought me over to Olga Ivanilova to see how they test for viscosity. Viscosity measures how "fluid" a liquid is.



Meg with Chemist Olga Ivanilova discussing how paint formulas are developed.



Meg with Chemist Inna Shchors explaining how they test paints.

For example, liquids like syrup are thicker than something like water. Paint has to be at just the right viscosity, or thickness, to work correctly. The last instrument Mr. Mislant showed me was used to test "gloss value" of paint. Some paints you see in the store are called high gloss and low gloss, and it lets you know how "shiny" the paint will be once it dries. Some paint is so glossy it even looks wet after it dries!

Mr. Mislant told me the best part about his job is that he gets to see many new materials that help him make the products better. He gets to work with creative people that make him feel like he is part of a team that is doing great work to help reduce pollution and make environmental friendly products. He enjoys being a scientist because he gets to do things that make improvements to the way we all live. As I was leaving, I thanked Mr. Mislant for the great tour of his lab. I look forward to telling all my friends about the wonderful things I saw, and reminding them that all of our homes are built on chemistry!

If you have any questions about my visit, you can write to me at meg@acs.org.

Personal Profile: Gil Mislant

What is your favorite food?
Italian food

What is your favorite color?
shades of green

What is your favorite movie?
"Star Wars"

When is your birthday?
January 7

What is your favorite pastime?
Cooking/Gardening

Very interesting project you were a part of?

Developing the paints used to paint the MGM Hotel & Resort in Las Vegas.

Can you tell me a little about your family?

My parents are from the Philippines. My father was a sailor and my mother a teacher. I have two brothers both also chemists, and four sisters: three are nurses and the fourth is an accountant. I have two sons, Jan and Chris. Jan is a graphic designer and Chris is studying to be a food chemist.

