

# Milgros Kuga November talk review



Margo Bell talking with Milagros

Our speaker for November was the young jewellery designer Milgros Kuga who was born in Peru but studied at the University of Arts in Nagoya Japan. Milli left Peru for Japan when she was 18 years old and spent her first year in Japan learning the language. She took a degree in Design Metal and Jewellery and has also won the Japan Jewellery Award for one of her necklaces. Milli has travelled the world and in every country she visits she finds new inspiration for her work.

The two big influences for her work are the textiles produced in both Peru and Japan. Milli explained that in Peru the crafts and weaving skills are family based handed down from generation to generation. Although she loves the bright colours used in Peruvian textiles and often uses them in her jewellery she wanted to be able to create more original work. Her great grandfather was Japanese so she thought a move to Japan would allow her to explore new ways of working and give her a chance to discover another culture.

Milli worked with a variety of metals on her degree course and for her final piece of work she designed a necklace made out of segments of silver on which she had enamelled the Peruvian symbols for

birthstones before linking them together.

After her degree Milli went on to design jewellery and headdresses for weddings. She showed us slides of the work she had produced for two Japanese brides and we all thought the headdresses were stunning and must have taken her hours of work.

One of the most challenging projects she has ever undertaken was working with a fashion designer producing costumes for the stage. She worked with leather and fabric to make the costumes and had to test how they would look under the strong stage lights. “Challenging but very rewarding” said Milli.

Milli now has an 18 month daughter and lives in Leamington with her French husband. She now concentrates on making hand crafted jewellery. Her necklaces are works of art and so unusual. She incorporates Japanese fabric in to the shapes she has designed and then hand stitches them together before adding beads and peals. The colours are very subtle although I have seen some with vibrant colours. Sadly she could only bring a small amount of work to show us.

The earrings she brought to show us are very sculptural and are made out of thin nylon tubes inspired by structures and architecture Milli has seen in the different countries she has visited.

Milli’s work is difficult to describe in words but you will be able to see some soon in the Gallery if you missed the talk. The staff at the Pump Rooms were very impressed with her work and spent a long time after the talk had finished choosing pieces to put into the Gallery.



Close up of jewellery

Was it the grey month of November that made members feel they needed to be transported to Peru and Japan? Well whatever the reason we had a full house for Milli's excellent talk which we all enjoyed.

Review by Moira Lamont.

Top right: Dominica admiring Milagros's work. Bottom right: Clive and Peter make their selection

