

## ART IN ACTION 2006

Wedmore goldsmith and fine jeweller Erica Sharpe is staging an exhibition of her unique granulation work following her success at one of the UK's largest art shows.

Erica, whose studio is in the village's Borough Mall, captivated audiences with her daily demonstrations of gold granulation at Art in Action at Waterperry House in Oxfordshire.

The annual four-day show last week attracted thousands of people who watched more than 500 artists and craftspeople at work.

Granulation is an intricate technique first used to decorate jewellery thousand of years ago by Etruscan goldsmiths.

Each minute 22ct gold granule is painstakingly applied with a miniature paintbrush dipped in a special gum to a 22ct gold surface before bonded with a flame and worked into a jewellery design.

Erica has spent two years perfecting the granulation technique taught her by an Italian goldsmith. She does the whole process from start to finish, from making the 22ct gold and turning it into granules through to the final polish.

Erica is one of few jewellers in the UK who do granulation work. She has even made most of the tools for the process, including the miniature kiln and sieves needed to grade the granules.

“The show was a fantastic opportunity for people to closely watch an intricate and fascinating process,” she said. “There were a few nerve-wracking moments when I wondered whether it would go right but, thankfully, I kept a steady hand.”

Her six granulation pieces – some set with precious gemstones – can be viewed at her studio from Wednesday to Friday until the end of September.



Wedmore jeweller Erica Sharpe demonstrates gold granulation at Art in Action