

Sensuous

22.11.2012 – 12.01.2013

Malgosia
Stepnik





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Born and grew up in South West Poland.

“I come from a tiny village in the south-west,” she explains. “It was surrounded by a beautiful forest with deers, hares and hedgehogs, but it was a miserable place. School and home were hell, claustrophobic, and I was a lonely girl. I used to escape to the forest, then I found art.”

Stepnik created her first proper drawing at the age of 13, by copying a picture of the actress Michelle Pfeiffer from a fashion magazine.

“I was an angsty teenager looking for purpose, reading like crazy, making clothes; then I started drawing and I just knew that that was it. My grandfather was the first to notice the little A4 drawing, and he said, ‘Oh, you are good, you could go to art school’, and I remember having this amazing euphoric feeling about that. I bought some oil paints, went with the feeling, and it seemed to work.”

Forbidden by her parents from attending art school, who believed there was no future in it for a young woman, Stepnik studied sociology and psychology at the University of Wroclaw, but later moved to London in 1999, where she received a first class degree in Fine Arts at City and Guilds London College of Art. “The art dream always stayed with me,” she says. “My energy was like dry straw, it only needed a match for it to explode. I drew anything and everything - still lives, people, buildings, leaves, birds in the forest, and always with colour, I’ve always loved colour.”

The combination of her psychology studies with her painting skills is evident in the complex canvases she creates, which have titles such as ‘Intensity’ and ‘Catharsis’. There’s an alien, almost primordial quality to it; her signature style being circular forms and bold psychedelic colours that evoke the inner workings of the human psyche. It’s a visceral approach, and it makes the work intensely personal, as well as highly seductive. “Energy under a very powerful microscope,” Stepnik calls it. “It’s about the relationship I have with myself and others. I guess my paintings are like energy explosions captured on canvas, or on the other mediums I use.”

It’s why she sometimes augments her pieces with sound, light, and film to strengthen the impact of the images on the viewer’s emotional state. Her ‘illuminated works’ have become especially desirable among collectors, after becoming an immediate sellout in the show, ‘States of Reverie’, at the Scream Galley London, in 2010. Self-identity is another major theme, one which she is currently exploring with her “body works”, to be revealed in 2012. She enjoys grappling with complex themes. “The way I see it, each thought carries an emotional charge - worry, anger, loneliness, love, hope, happiness; it all runs through my body. Letting go of that emotional charge is how I create my work.”

The result is a chaotic tapestry, a kaleidoscope of biomorphic forms that directly reflect her imagination and experiences. So bold are some of the pieces that they seem to be parodying our notions of modernism, although Stepnik insists that this is not her intention. Most of all, her work is brutally honest, still burning from the embers of a restless childhood.

“When I was growing up in Poland, my image of places like London and Paris was idyllic,” she says. “TV and fashion magazines made me feel like I was missing out on something, and everything seemed so new, so colourful, so light - the shops, the restaurants, the streets, the cars, the beautifully dressed people. The truth is I wanted to be one of those beautifully perfect people too.”





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Vitality

2012

207 x 92 cm

Acrylic mediums on aluminium panel,

LED illuminated frame



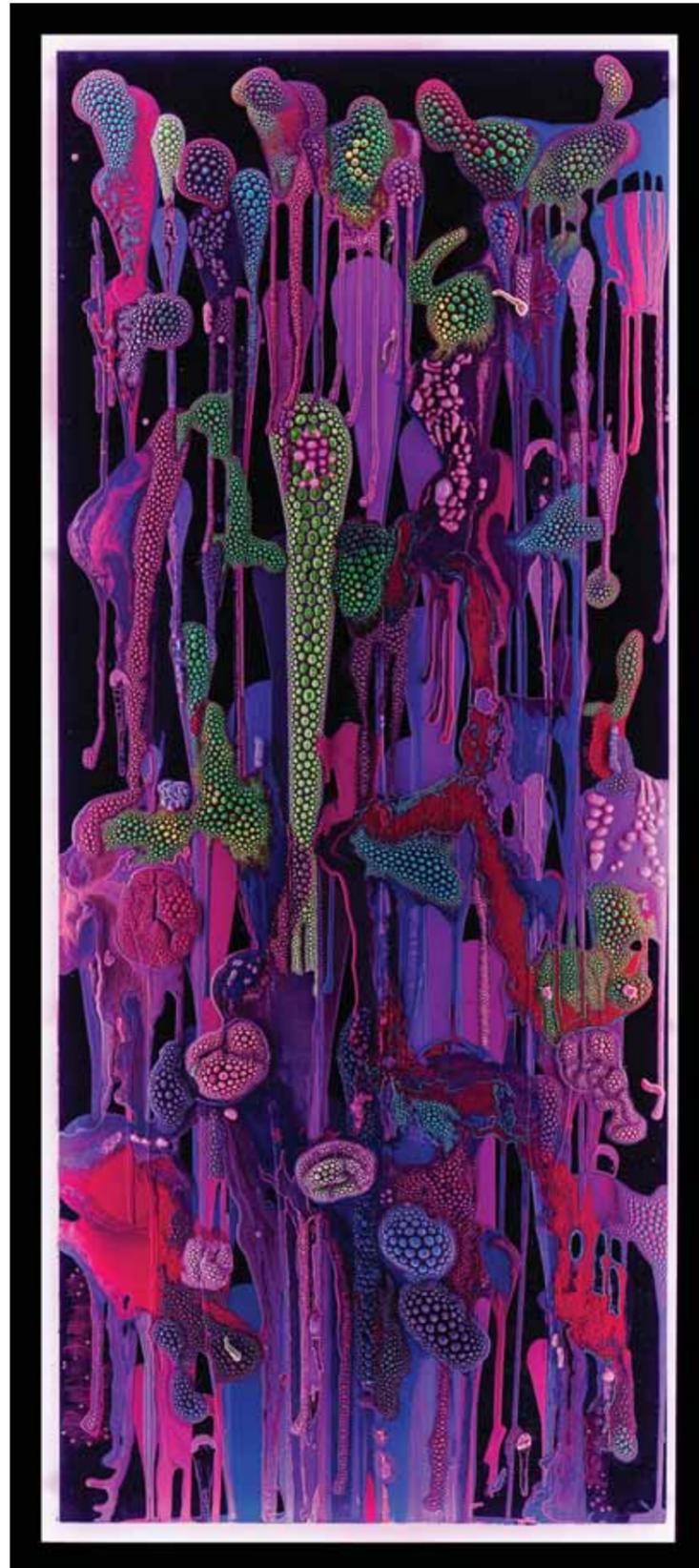
Luscious

2012

207 x 92 cm

Acrylic mediums on aluminium panel,

LED illuminated frame



Inquisitive

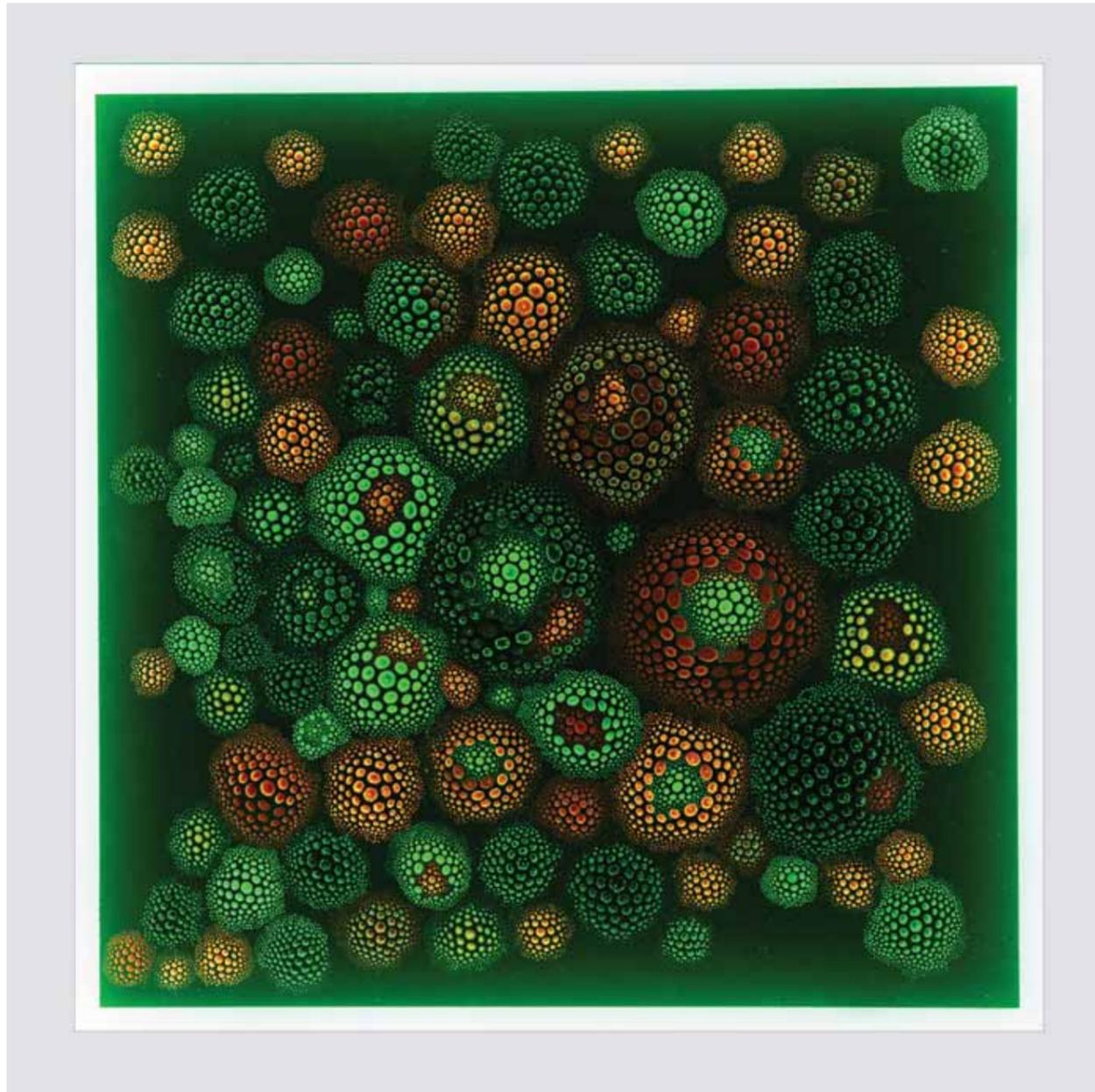
2012

150 x 50 cm

Acrylic mediums on aluminium panel,

LED illuminated frame





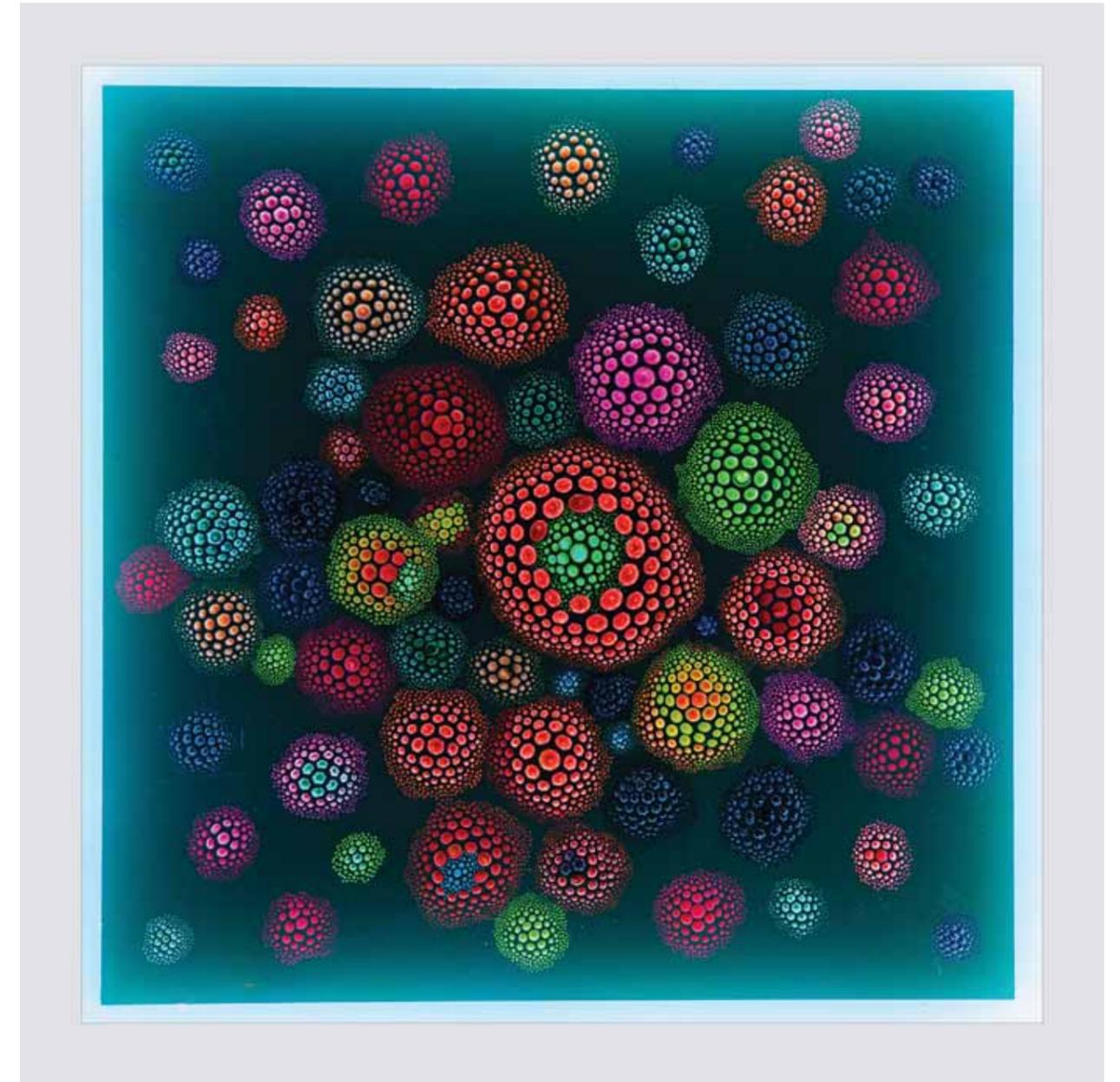
Evocative I

2012

80 x 80 cm

Acrylic mediums on aluminium panel,

LED illuminated frame



Evocative III

2012

80 x 80 cm

Acrylic mediums on aluminium panel,

LED illuminated frame



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The Face

2012

80 x 80 cm

Acrylic mediums on aluminium panel,

LED illuminated frame





RP 06 in white/ Soul

2012

60 cm diameter

Acrylic mediums on wooden panel



RP 07 in magenta/ Laughter

2012

160 cm diameter

Acrylic on wood

I'm in love

2012

207 x 90 cm

Bespoke black illuminated frame,

Acrylic mediums and etching on

photograph.



Star Woman

2012

207x92 cm

Acrylic mediums on aluminium panel,

LED illuminated frame





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Upcomings

November 14 - December 15, 2012 Solo exhibition, SODA, Istanbul

22-24 November, 2012 Contemporary Istanbul Art Fair, SODA, Istanbul

October 18th, 2012 The Shooting Chase Contemporary Exhibition at the Royal College of Art, London

Exhibitions

2012 Solo exhibition, "States of mind", Scream Gallery London

2012 Group exhibition, "Unweave the rainbow", Scream Gallery London

2012 London Art Fair 2012, London

2011 Macmillan De'Longhi Art Auction

2011 Group exhibition, "Scream contemporaries", Scream Gallery London

2011 Accesso Gallery, Pietrasanta, Italy

2011 Group exhibition "States of Reverie", Scream Gallery, London

2010 Solo exhibition, "Journey to Self", Studio 54, London

2010 The Russian, Eastern & Oriental Fine Art Fair, London

2010 Solo pop-up exhibition, "Electric", Aura of Mayfair, London

2009 Solo exhibition, "Self-growing", Studio 54, Glebe Place, London

2008 Solo exhibition, Works 2008, Alexander Place, London

2008 Graduation Show, City & Guilds London Collage of Art

2007 Stepnik, Newall, Rodilosso, Studio Show, London

Education

2005-2008 First Class BA (Hons) in Fine Arts - Paintings

City & Guilds London College of Art, London

2002-2003 Foundation Course - Fashion, sculpture, painting and mixed media

Chelsea Collage of Art & Design, London

2001-2002 Modern and Contemporary Art Studies

Christie's Education, London

1997-1999 Sociology, Psychology & Philosophy

University of Wroclaw, Poland

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