



**SCULPTURES BY JULIA  
SINELNIKOVA WHICH  
TRANSPORT YOU INTO AN  
ETHEREAL WORLD FILLED  
WITH REFLECTIVE HUES AND  
FLOWING ORGANIC SHAPES**

BY CHRISTINA NAFZIGER





## IMMERSIVE LIGHT SCULPTURES BY JULIA SINELNIKOVA WHICH TRANSPORT YOU INTO AN ETHEREAL WORLD FILLED WITH REFLECTIVE HUES AND FLOWING ORGANIC SHAPES

Multidisciplinary artist Julia Sinelnikova creates immersive light sculptures that transports its viewers into an ethereal world filled with mesmerizing, reflective hues and flowing organic shapes. The reflective qualities in her diverse choice of materials combined with the kinetic movement found her installations bend and warp the environment around it, forming a unique sensory experience. Also a performance artist, Sinelnikova takes on her character "The Oracle," adding an element of movement that further interacts with the space. The accomplished artist has shown her work internationally in New York City, Finland, France, and Spain and has been awarded numerous artist awards and residencies.

BY CHRISTINA NAFZIGER ([HTTP://ARTMAZEMAG.COM/AUTHOR/CHRISTINA-NAFZIGER/](http://artmazemag.com/author/christina-nafziger/))

Join us as Sinelnikova describes light as "the language of the future" while discussing with us her connection with her work through performance, finding inspiration in nature and her upcoming residency at Lightbox Lab in New York City.

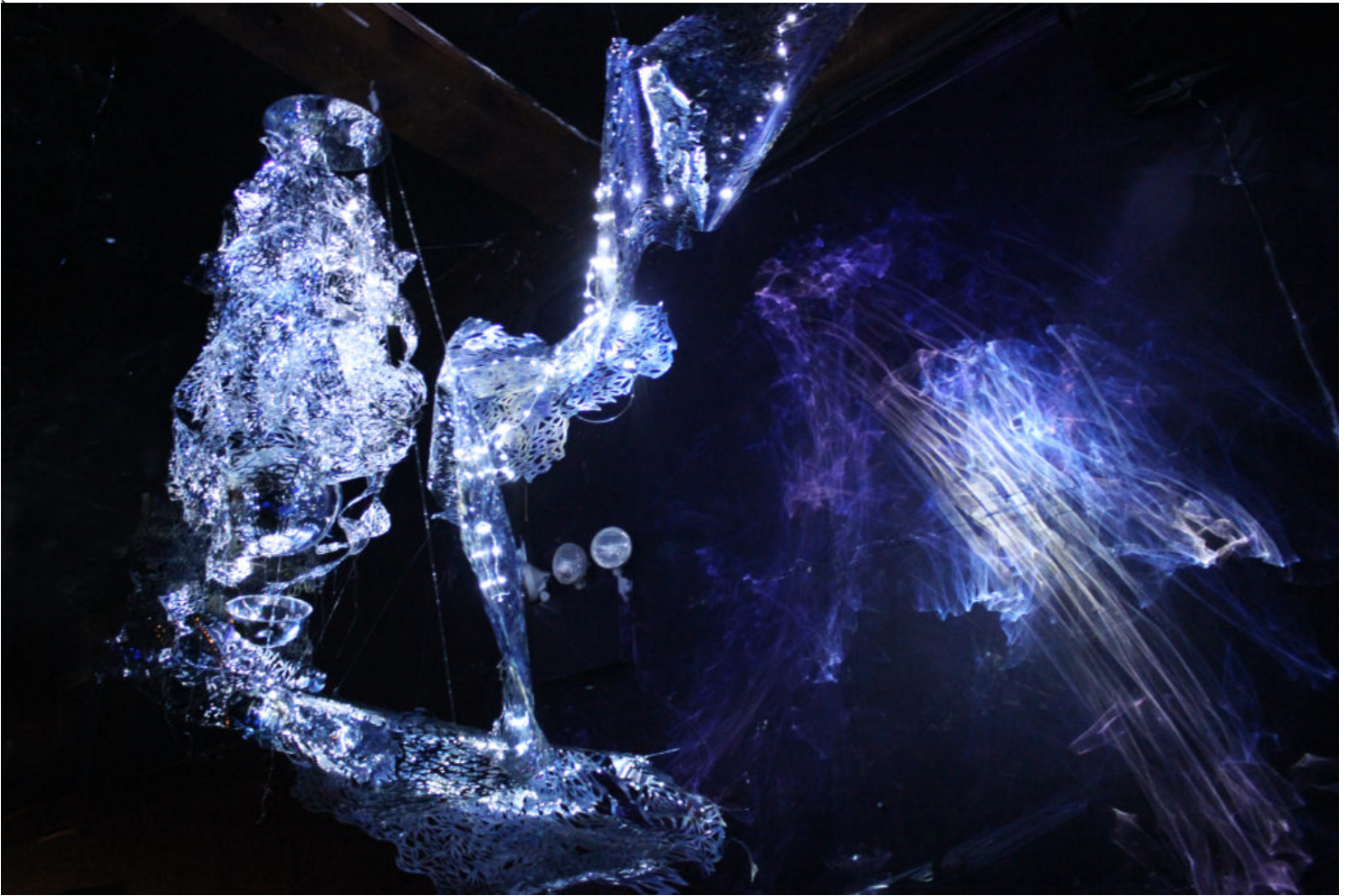
**AMM: Tell us a bit about your background as an artist. When did you begin working in installation and performance? Did you ever work in any other mediums?**

JS: I focused on oil painting early on, with shadowy city night scenes and lone wanderers as subjects. My transitional series was in collage: for several years I combined vintage magazine cutouts and tiny squares containing my Holga thumbnails. As I continued to work with themes of woman as archetype and information overload, the images slid off the picture plane and into 3D space. I built acrylic glass environments for imagery I printed onto transparent acetate sheets, bent and twisted within near-invisible structures. Quickly, the shapes became more abstract and I realized my inclination towards 3D design and light. This was in my early days in New York, when I was first encountering large-scale light installations at underground events and museums.

**AMM: You work with a large amount of interesting and uncommon materials, such as holographic film, LED lights and iridescent pigment. Can you tell us a bit about these diverse materials?**

JS: My goal is to source a myriad of unusual materials that speak to me and use them in their maximal, most unexpected and structurally viable capacity.





*'Mere Angel', hand cut mylar and light sculpture, commissioned by Mutual Dreaming NYC*

**AMM: Your most recent body of work was entitled *Organ Farm*, taking place at Industry City's gallery in Brooklyn, NY. This installation, along with some of your other works, utilized light from LED lights and projections to add an incredible element of depth and colour to the work. Do you see light itself as another material within art? What is the relationship between light and your artistic process?**

JS: Light is the language of the future, and I refer to my works as "light sculptures." I am interested in both sunlight interactions and nighttime light effects with projectors and lasers, so each work takes on a different life dependent on light settings. I work with plastics films, which refract light in various ways, such as mirrored mylar and lenticular film, layering resin onto many of the sculptures to create a glassy effect. Using light, one can transform any space into an immersive environment, dissolving and manipulating architecture.

**AMM: The shapes that are formed in some of your installations, like in *Organ Farm* and *Crystal Void*, often resemble those found in nature such as in coral or feather patterns. Do you ever draw visual influences from nature? Where do you look for inspiration?**

JS: The patterns cut into the works reference nature forms, fractals and found light patterns, which I trace and combine with a freehand technique to get the final design. Inspirations for this include diatoms, which are single-celled sea organisms that glow in the dark, and feature complex, modular patterns. The "Fairy Organs" series of hanging, cocoon-like sculptures play with pseudobiological, alien forms.

**AMM: Can you tell us a bit about your performance work? What do you feel is the most key element between performer and space?**

JS: When interacting with my sculptures and environments, I take on a character called "The Oracle," a sorceress mother. My sculptures are like living beings, which I am in a way giving birth to in my slow labor, and through my movements and lighting, they speak. It is an energy channeling process. The audience must feel a sense of close connection within the environments I build. Hence, I draw them close to me during performances, often asking them to sit for meditation at the beginning. I write and recite poetry meant to arouse surreal mindfulness, a lucid dream state, in my audiences. One new development is that I have recently begun to record these spoken word works professionally, so hopefully I will be able to publish them as tracks at some point in the future.

The performances take place once my installation environments are fully set up as a type of light-and-shadow enclosure. I have also performed widely within the realm of Vector Gallery, a conceptual light art space and performance collective founded by artist JJ Brine. Vector is seeking a new space to open in Brooklyn for our fifth and final, one-year pop up space.



*Julia Sinelnikova performing as THE ORACLE of Vector Gallery NYC, original Clinton Street location*

**AMM: There appears to be an element of movement in your work, as your installations are often hung from a ceiling. Does this aspect ever influence the element of performance in the piece?**

JS: I am constantly working towards my dream of creating immersive light environments that react to human movement in an organic way. To this end, I continuously study software and engineering techniques, which promote interactivity, and have built a surveillance-themed code project in MaxMSP.

The ceiling and sky realms draw me, so I hang my works in a way which allows them to move and turn constantly, either due to volume displacement or blowing fans. Eventually I would like to include motors in the works to create complex interactions. I do have a predilection for naturally occurring movement, and build with that in mind.

**AMM: The unique atmospheres that your installations create are both ethereal and mesmerizing. What kind of environment do you aim to build in your work?**

JS: My goal is to draw the viewer into an otherworldly realm where walls and hard angles disappear, invoking a sense of infinite nothingness, or of floating amongst galaxies. The sculptures, lighting and spoken word are combined to enthrall the viewer into a state of self-awareness, even as I beckon them to allow their bodies to dissolve. I want my audience to gain a sense of the tightness they carry inside of them, and to unravel it a bit. Many of us are holding on to some control mechanisms so tightly, which can help us form a stable personality, but also prevents us from dealing with certain emotions, and thus from imagining that other realities exist. I aim to unleash connectivity.

My projection-mapped video works are meant to give viewers a sense of playful interaction, paired with the discomfort which comes from knowing how much unsecured data floats around on the web. I often siphon unlocked webcam feeds from the local area into this work, bringing people who do not realize that they are being viewed into the video compositions.





*Sentinel: Temple of Self-Awareness; hand-fabricated wood structure, hand cut mylar, fabric, 4-channel projected video, acrylic, dichroic crystals; The Museum of Human Achievemen; Austin, Texas*

**AMM: Are there any other artists that mainly work in installation that you find inspiring?**

JS: I am inspired by artists such as James Turrell and Olafur Eliasson in their use of light and geometry to transform space to test perception, as well as the immersive video installations of Pipilotti Rist, who channels feminine archetypes through autobiographical, surreal loops. I also take note of Yayoi Kusama's use of mirror and light effects to expand closed space. I combine these visual influences with my interest in activists such as Edward Snowden and Anonymous, who have worked to expose the threat of surveillance and data security in some cases.

**AMM: What is next for you? Do you have any future projects that you can share with us?**

JS: I have just been awarded a fellowship to participate in the Lightbox Lab residency in the Times Square area of Manhattan, from August through October 2017, which will culminate in a public exhibition at their space during the last month.

Following the completion of my recent solo exhibition ORGAN FARM, I am moving on to new resin techniques in my studio. I am building my workstation for casting natural textures in resin, moving forward from years of experimentation with poured resin. The study of interactive coding techniques occupies my spare time, with aims of expanding my surveillance installations. I am excited to be opening my studio doors for [Bushwick Open Studios 2017](https://artsinbushwick.org/events/resin-sculptures-surveillance-experiments-at-nonbinary-studios/) (<https://artsinbushwick.org/events/resin-sculptures-surveillance-experiments-at-nonbinary-studios/>) this coming September 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, so New Yorkers will have a chance to view my work up close then.

I would like to share that my first print interview is available in bookstores nationwide via [Quiet Lunch](http://quietlunch.com/shop/bookno4-ldlr33/) (<http://quietlunch.com/shop/bookno4-ldlr33/>) magazine, and online. The six page, full color spread can be found in Barnes & Noble and McNally Jackson Books in New York, as of two weeks ago.

I am working with Wallplay in NYC, who have curated and produced several solo shows of my work throughout the city over the past few years. My artwork inventory is available via their Artsy page. I look forward to presenting new experiential projects with them this year and beyond.



Find out more about the artist: [www.juliasinelnikova.com](http://www.juliasinelnikova.com) (<http://www.juliasinelnikova.com>)

Interview by Christina Nafziger for ArtMaze Mag.



*Julia Sinelnikova performing as THE ORACLE of Vector Gallery NYC, East Broadway location*



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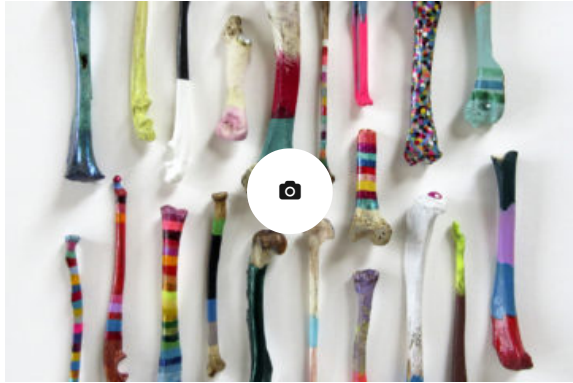


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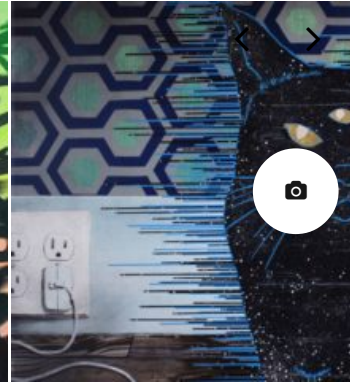
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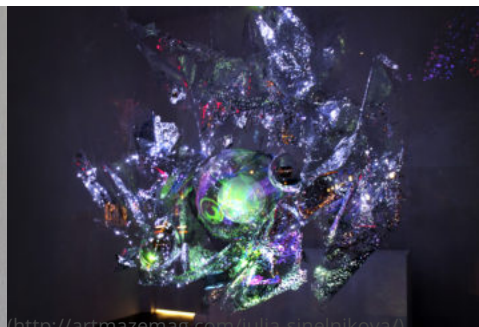


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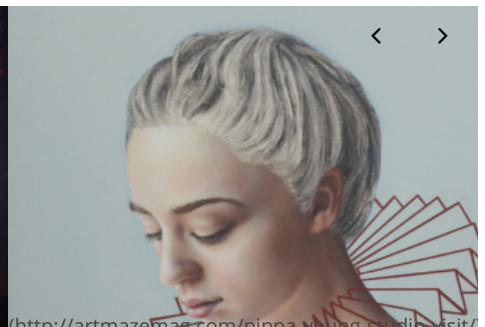
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