



# Transparent pathways

**H**OVERING, apparently weightlessly, in space, light weaves its way through fine, filmy monofilament, like thread, grouped in lacy formations. Subtle, beautiful and sensual. The work is part of Rita Parniczky's *X-Ray Series* – like the bony structure of our bodies, invisible to the eye, but exposed under x-ray, gets revealed in the lit-up contrasts.

– I've always been interested in the actual construction of something, like the bare bones of our bodies. With weave, it is usually either the warp or the weft that is more pronounced. I wanted to develop a method of forming an image where everything was visible, transparent. The warp, like the skeletal frame carrying matter, pre-determined, and the weft that envelops, shaping itself around and about.

Fine nylon monofilament in the warp combines with other robust threads to meander and enhance the patterning, sometimes woven in and almost hidden within compact areas of weft, sometimes laid bare. The two materials are threaded together, but lie on different warp beams.

Rita Parniczky's computer operated *Weavebird loom* is made by Leclerc Looms of Canada. She uses the 24 shafts in her pattern design, raised and lowered independently according to the liftplan. The weft sequence potential is pretty well inexhaustible. There are two pedals for changing sheds. The weave comes off the loom how you see it in the end result; Rita does not need to apply any off-loom manipulations to move the threads in position. Some are not woven in but cut away as they aren't part of the construction. Tufty ends as seen on one side show up more shadow-like on the other, reinforcing the feel of an x-ray film.

*X-Ray Vault Series I*, 2014, nylon monofilament, rayon and fine iridescent thread, 155 x 68 cm. Effects created by light. The translucent quality is similar to that of the bony structure as seen on an x-ray film. Other associations are with icicles.

Her technique allows the ends to bunch up where there are floats or to be pressed apart by the weft. To manage the weaving of such diverse materials, she has the thicker cotton and rayon yarns on one warp beam and the glossy nylon thread on another. She is happy to talk about it, knowing it is of interest to weavers. But is not hung up on technique. Weaving is the method, what matters is the outcome conveying the effects she is after.

And the fact is that if she markets the work as weaving, a textile, it ends up in a niche. Instead, the emphasis is on the architectonic qualities: its place in a room, creating and altering that space.

IT WAS DURING HER second year of Textile Design at Central Saint Martins in London, when working on her first experimental project, that she discovered the technique and was advised to defer working with it to her third year. She has decided to develop the concept and technique further in her graduate project which allowed her to fully research and test this body of work over a longer period of time of four months.

The focus of the course she did was on students finding their own artistic identity, whilst building up extensive skills and knowledge about forms of practice and the way different artists work.

THE PATTERN WORLD in her designs came in part out of photograms, an early form of photography, in which a photo-graphic image is created without a camera by placing an object directly onto photosensitive material. Rita photographed various objects, then printed them over and over again zooming in for organic details, greatly enlarging these to bring out the intricate details to work from.

Laid side by side, the kinship between the finished weave and the printout is quite striking. Rita also photographs her finished work, with the intention of showing the images alongside the weaves at some point



## RITA PARNICZKY

ARTIST  
BACKGROUND

"Growing up in the Hungarian countryside, the flat landscapes of my region gave me unlimited views of the horizon, un-bounding my perspectives of scale. Light and shade through skeleton-like winter trees, the glare of virgin snow, and the contrast between these elements are ever present in my visual language."

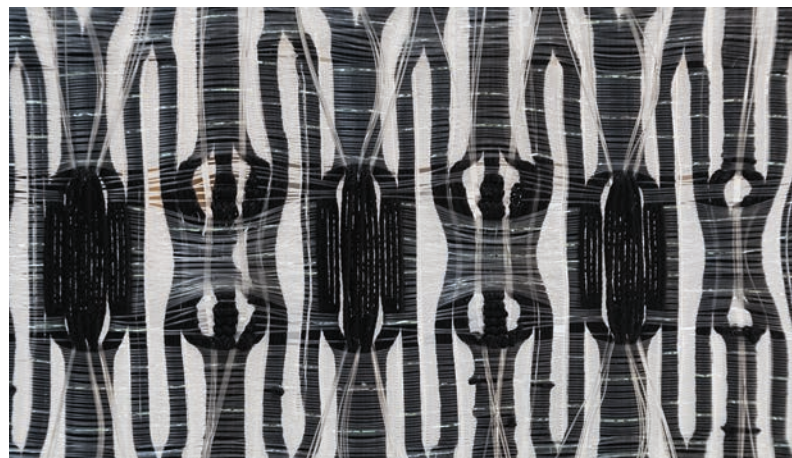
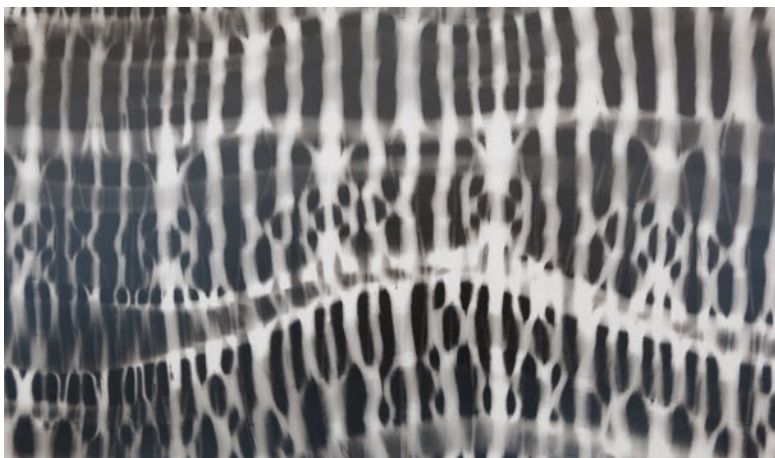
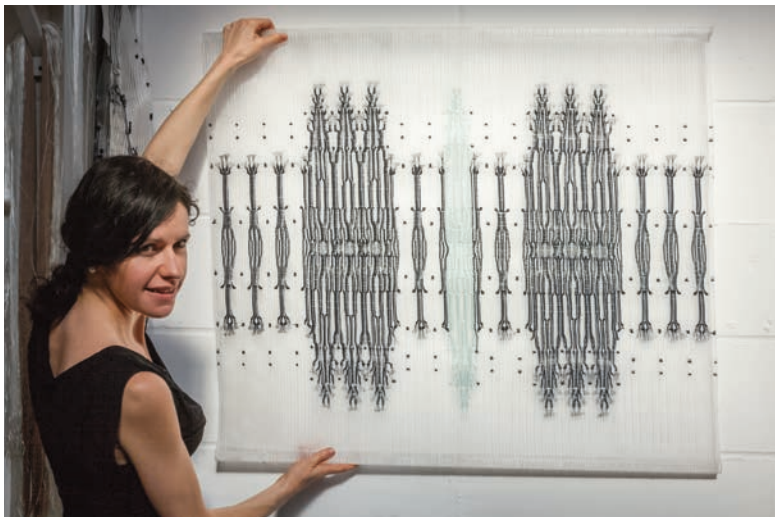
EDUCATION  
Art training in porcelain painting, Budapest.  
Central Saint Martins, College of Art and Design (UAL).

SELECTED AWARDS AND GRANT: Winner of Perrier-Jouët Arts Salon Prize 2016  
Peter Collingwood Trust Award for innovation in loom-based work, 2015

EXHIBITIONS:  
Weaving with Light, Perrier-Jouët Arts Salon Exhibition, Contemporary Applied Arts London, 24 June–30 July 2016

Contemporary Construction, Bluecoat Display Centre Liverpool 27 August–25 September 2016

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in the future. Closing the circle. Two art forms coming together.

Patterning and structure are of vital importance. She holds back from adding more colour. White, black and white and a dash of turquoise build up contrasts, combined with the material itself. Colour would mean risking a shift of focus away from what she wants to show. There is a parallel with photography, where black and white photography needs to be worked out with attention given to contrasts and composition in order to convey the message.

– I want people looking at my work to lose themselves in my world of structure and pattern.

The six years or so following graduation have been pretty intensive. Even at the time of her finals, she got invited to exhibit her graduation work, as one of a few selected from the college. The graduation show was visited by *The Worshipful Company of Weavers*, which is an organisation with roots in the 12th century, that supports and promotes handweaving.

The Company runs an award referred to as wall hanging commission. They, alongside with their partner the *Victoria & Albert Museum* in London select one weaver roughly every three years, whom they

commission to make a new piece that will join the permanent collection of the V&A Museum in London.

The citation ran:

*“In woven textile design most of what is seen has already been made before. But just once or twice in a generation there is a designer who immediately you can recognise as a person who has the loom craft, the inspiration and the courage to push the boundaries of weave to a new and innovative level.*

*Rita Parniczky is that talented exceptional designer who combines the meticulous attention to the detail and originality, which is revealed in her perfection on the loom.”*

EXHIBITIONS HAVE FOLLOWED on one from another. Six of her weaves went into the show, *Building with Textiles*, at the TextielMuseum Tilburg, Holland.

That same year she was the recipient of the *Peter Collingwood Trust Award* for her “innovative technique and artistic expression of the utmost quality”.

2016 KICKED OFF in similar style. She has just been awarded the *Perrier-Jouët Arts Salon Prize 2016* for her ability to reinterpret the spirit of Art Nouveau in a contemporary expression.

SINCE GRADUATING, she has been working in her central London studio based at the creative business incubator, Cockpit Arts. Here, along with many different designers and artists Rita has access to on site business coaching and business support; these are as invaluable at the start of a career as the creative setting. Rent is subsidised to help new businesses to set off successful creative careers.

There are spots in the studio where the sun shines in every day at the same time. The work becomes a living being, which is how she wants it. She would really like to exhibit in “living” light settings, where the visitor can return time after time and behold the work in different guises. As many earlier cultures used light, to highlight detail and call up the magic. ▲

top left / Rita Parniczky uses robust cotton and rayon yarns in her work to create silhouettes within the transparency of nylon monofilament.

top right / The design process.

below left / Work photographed.

below right / Detail.