

"Perth's Threshold artspace shows no signs of watering down its bold remit in programming stunning and inspiring artwork" Scotland on Sunday

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## LIFE IS A STORY. THE SCOTTISH EPISODE **Izabella Gustowska**

**The first solo exhibition in Britain** by this internationally acclaimed Polish artist  
**Exhibition open** Mon-Sat 10am-6pm or late on performance evenings. **Admission** always free  
**Co-curated by** Iliyana Nedkova and Urszula Sniegowska

part of Horsecross' **Scottish Tides-Polish Spring:**  
a three month celebration of Scotland's vibrant cultural connections with Poland  
supported by **Homecoming Scotland 2009** and **Polska! Year: A Year of Contemporary Everything From Poland!**

7 Mar - 4 Apr 09

free exhibition guide

### FREE EVENTS

**Artist's and co-curators talk over brunch:** Sat 7 Mar 09 11am-1pm. Meet in front of Threshold Wave  
**Survey of artist's video works on a 60 min loop:** Sat 7 Mar 09 6pm until late and on  
Sun 8 Mar 09 10am until late at Norie-Miller Studio, Perth Concert Hall  
**Curator's guided tours:** By prior arrangement through e-mailing  
inedkova@horsecross.co.uk or iliyana@arcprojects.org



**Wave** = a long canvas of 22 flat screens in a row under the copper-clad dome



**Stage** = a playground for live art with larger-than-life projections, a camera and a screen left of the wave



**Flush** = a trail of 8 small screens tucked away in the public toilets

Life is a Story. The Scottish Episode, 2009 is the latest Horsecross' commission and acquisition for the collection of contemporary art at Threshold artspace by Izabella Gustowska (born 1948 in Poznan where she lives and works). This short 22-channel artists' video art installation is on view at the Threshold Wave showing in a cinematic loop which cycles every 10 minutes daily between 8am-1am. The work also continues onto the Threshold Stage and Flush areas of the artspace.

Utilising her signature style of saturated, deep greens, the artist has compressed our ordinary life into twenty two symbolic audio-visual 'crystal balls' revealing anything from daily passions to abstract gestures. Gustowska's work, which is celebrated internationally for its pioneering use of video, could be summed up in a word 'ona' – Polish for 'her' – an evolving story of the contemporary woman and the male gaze. This accounts for its enduring appeal.

Following her short but inspiring artist's residency in Perth during January 2009 Gustowska said: "I believe that my work deals with universal subjects such as life and death and the green colour, for me, equals nature and energy. Some of the twenty two micro videos which comprise my new Horsecross commission have more sensuality and symbolism in them, while others are observations, often in slow-motion. All reveal individual stories complete with unique soundscapes. A Scottish bagpipe player acts as the narrator in my life story".

Accompanied by a new issue of **Read More – Horsecross journal of critical writing** – dedicated to Life is a Story. The Scottish Episode featuring a newly commissioned essay by **Urszula Sniegowska, Curator at Ujazdowski Castle Centre of Contemporary Art, Warsaw.**

Launched in 2005 Threshold artspace is about positioning Perth and Scotland within the contemporary art world at large through commissioning, producing, exhibiting, publishing and collecting.

Threshold artspace is Scotland's first dedicated gallery for digital public art, with nine unique spaces presenting a varied programme of artists' films, videos, games, text, photography, performance, light, sound and software art.

open daily  
admission FREE

Threshold artspace Perth Concert Hall Horsecross Mill Street Perth PH1 5HZ UK  
0044 (0) 845 612 6322 info@horsecross.co.uk www.horsecross.co.uk

up to 24 hours

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## SELECTED VIDEO WORKS Izabella Gustowska

Six critically acclaimed video works screen and cycle on an hourly loop

**For one weekend only:** Sat 7 Mar 09 6pm until late and on Sun 8 Mar 09 10am until late

**Norie-Miller Studio, Perth Concert Hall:** specially converted as a state-of-the-art micro cinema adjacent to the Threshold artspace

### 1. WONDERFUL LIFE, 2003, 5: 54 minutes

A short story about Guccio, the artist's dog, who reveals the secret life of his owner.

### 2. DREAM I, 2006, 3:24 minutes

Dreams help us go beyond ourselves in moments which verge on eternity. Yet it is hard to know what inspires them. Where do dreams take their intensity, repetitiveness, colour and sounds from?

### 3. LOVE-ROSE, 2005, 5:30 minutes

"Love – Rose encloses in red glass a number of intimate scenes as references to the masterpieces from Rafael to the pre-Raphaelites including Manet, Ingres and Girodet. Among the masters, there are close-ups of female face in ecstasy, kissing angels, Cupid and Psyche, Olympia and Ophelia. The combined media of painting and video express different aspect of love..." **P. Leszkowicz**

### 4. MY EUROPE, 2004, 1:06 minute

Poland's accession to the European Union as an ode to joy and young people. Shot at the plain-air workshop in Skoki, Poland this work portrays icons of youth and silly joy as if the world has finally opened up and freedom is within reach.

### 5. THE ART OF CHOICE, 2006/7: The Art of a Hard Choice, 19 minutes + The Art of an Easy Choice, 19 minutes

A diptych based on a dialogue between two different, though close, realities. The Art of a Hard Choice toys with film reality: images, dubbing, multi-language texts. It relies on a catalogue of human passions and facts taken out of a 'film life'. It is intriguing and satiated, as such is the nature of cinema. Everything is thus more real than in actual reality. In turn, The Art of an Easy Choice shows the individual perspective through a collection of private notes kept over 5 years in a mini DV camera. The tough choice is up to us: which reality is more fulfilling.

### 6. SHE – MEDIA STORY, 2008, 8 minutes

"The world has become both talkative and silent, populated and dissected. In this world I'm looking for a woman. In museums, concerts, and shopping centres....I spy on her, both anonymous and recognized in the macro shots of the camera. In things she might have lost, in films on YouTube she might have watched, or in words she might have said...It is She who becomes an 'artwork'. It is She who is an avatar in Second Life. Perhaps we will find her through monitoring...Who is that woman? Who is SHE?" **Izabella Gustowska**

**Izabella Gustowska** graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Poznań where she is currently a Professor. Her most recent solo exhibitions include SHE – Media Story, 2008, Old Slaughterhouse, Poznan; Life is a Story, 2007, National Museum, Poznan; Art of Difficult Choice, 2006, Programme Gallery, Warsaw and Passions and Other Cases, 2001, Ujazdowski Castle Contemporary Art Center, Warsaw. Since 2003 Gustowska has participated in a number of major international exhibitions including Architectures of Gender, Sculpture Centre, New York; Two Asias, Two Europes, Duolun MoMA Museum, Shanghai and 2nd Mediations Biennale, Poznan. Her work is in major public collection including Museum of Modern Art, New York; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Museum Moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig, Vienna; Centres de la Gravure et de l'image imprimée, Brussels; Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna; San Zenobia Foundation, Bologna; Ujazdowski Castle Contemporary Art Center, Warsaw and State Art Gallery Zachęta, Warsaw.

<http://free.art.pl/gustowska>

Life is a Story. The Scottish Episode is produced by the artist and Horsecross for Threshold artspace in partnership with 55degrees, Glasgow and Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art, Warsaw.

Supported by Homecoming Scotland 2009, Adam Mickiewicz Institute's Polska! Year and the Scottish Arts Council New Work Fund.

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Look out for our concurrent exhibitions Acres Wild by Marek Styczen and Us, But Not Only Us by Perth Polish Support Group + Juliet Rees. Also, COLLECT + SUPPORT initiative at the new extension of the art-space at Perth Theatre's Redrooms, 185 High Str, Perth PH1 5UU