

I wish to thank my family and 'art tribe' for their continual unwavering support and encouragement. Thank you to Dr Phillip Hall of St Andrews War Memorial Hospital for displaying part of this exhibition in your hospital gallery for patients and hospital staff to enjoy. To John Armstrong, Andrea Higgins, Kerry-Anne Farrer, and Nicola Holly thank you for your generous guidance, advice and support of my art practise. Last but not least a very big thank you to the staff and volunteers of Logan Art Gallery for presenting this exhibition and always encouraging and supporting my new found ways of expression.



Logan Art Gallery, Cnr Wembley Rd and Jacaranda Ave
Logan Central QLD 4114
Open 10am – 5pm Tuesday – Saturday

Cover: *Capillary action*. 2018. 910cm x 1270cm, inkjet print, wooden frame, crystal clear glass

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CHRYZ ZANTIS
INTERNAL LANDSCAPES



Left: *Heart and lung slide* 2018.
85cm d. chiffon fabric, bias binding,
pima cotton yarn, sewing threads.

Right: *Aorta* 2018. 6cm d x 15cm h.
glass chemistry bottle, glass
marble, chiffon fabric, crochet
cotton, watercolour.



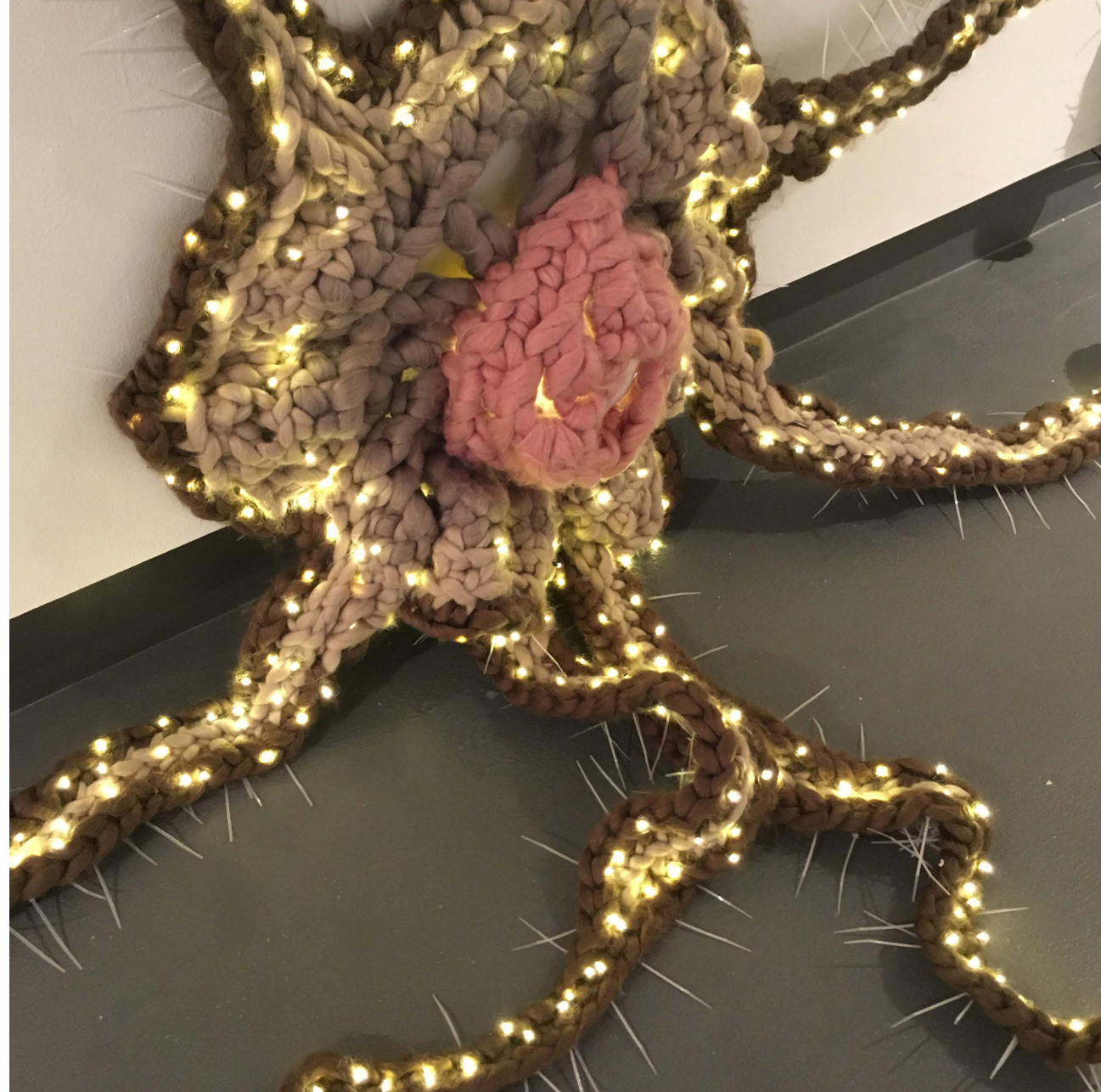


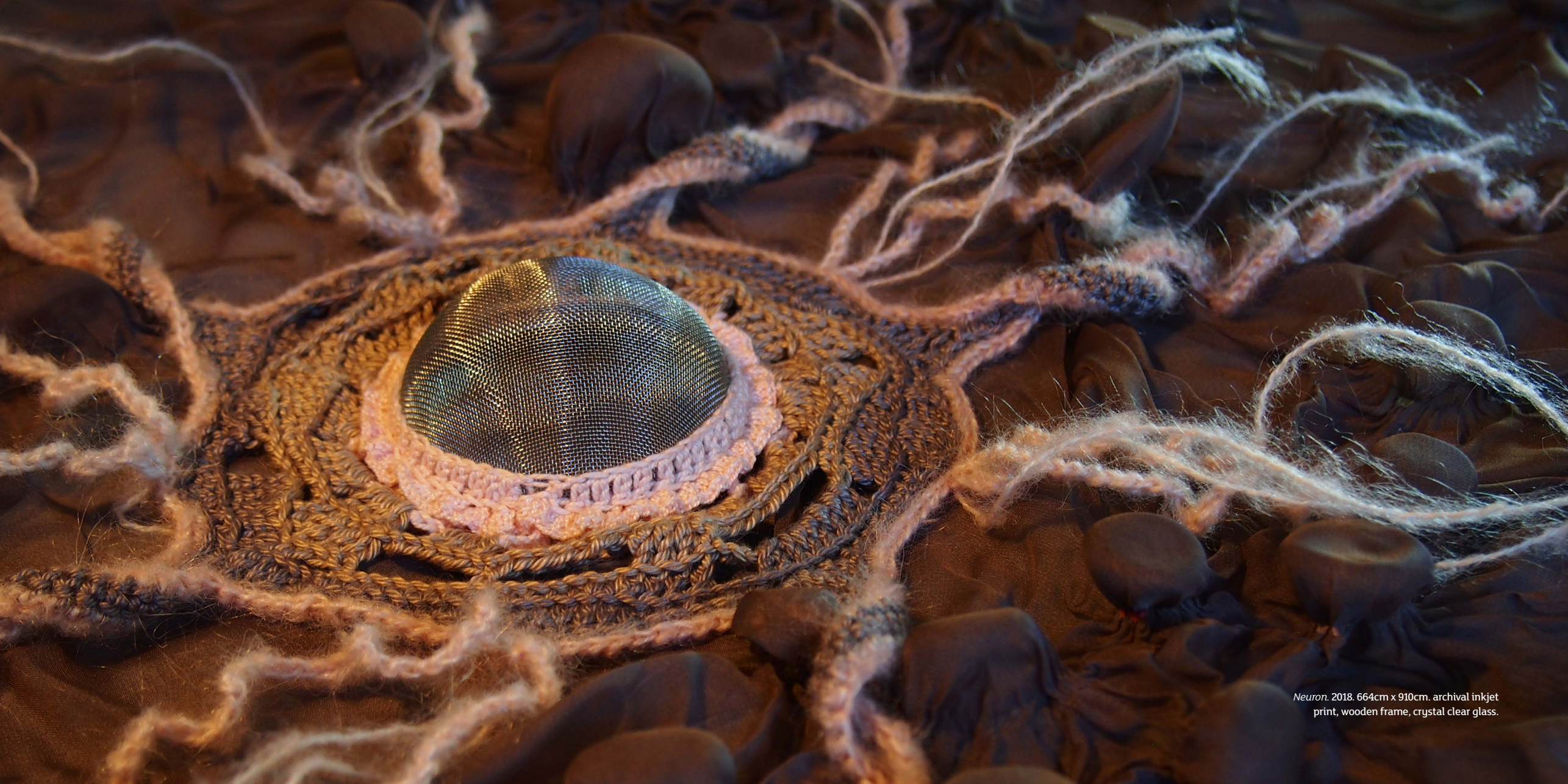
Brain MRI, 2018. 83cm d. chiffon fabric,
bias binging, pima cotton, vintage family
heirloom doily, hoola hoop, sewing threads.



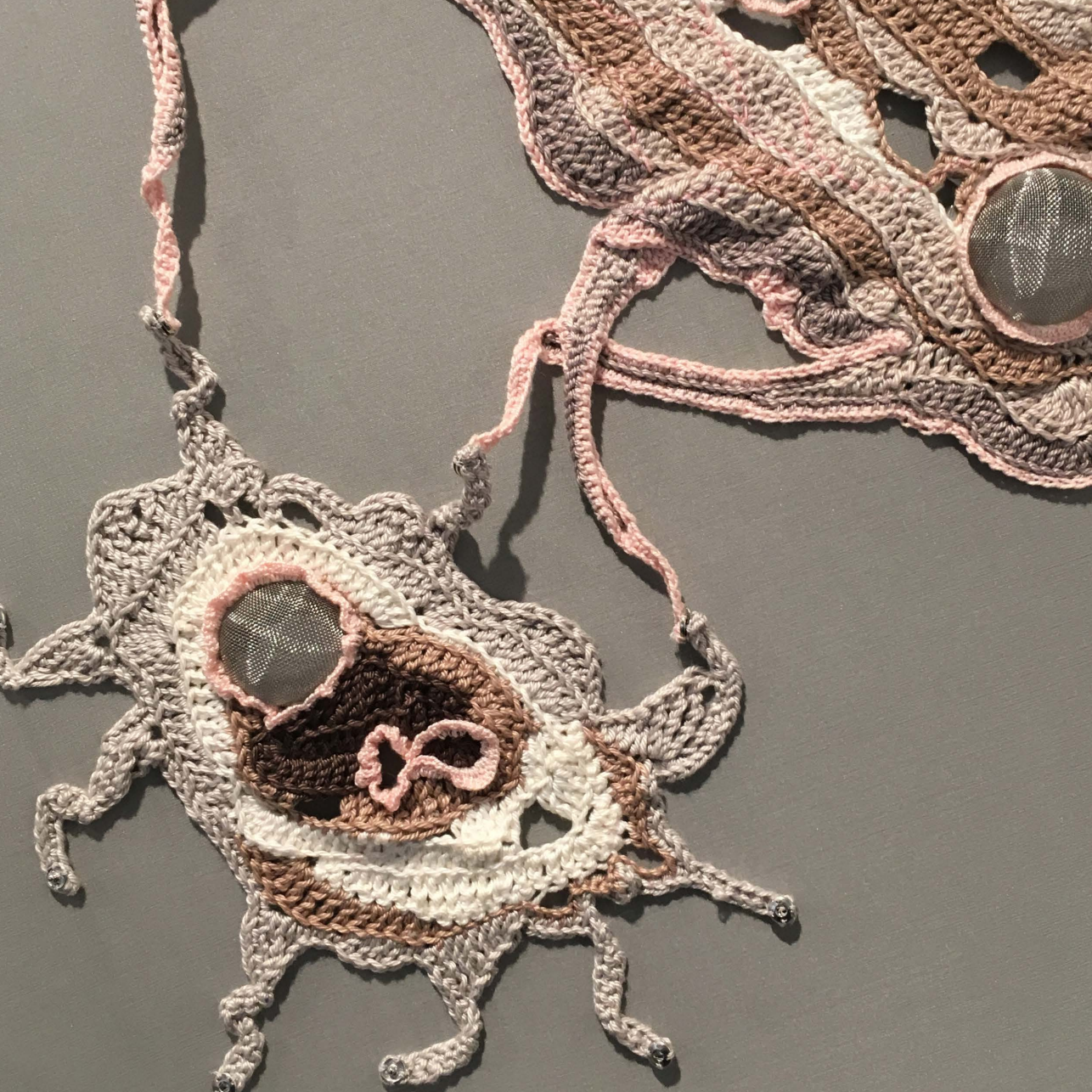
Left: *Hold that thought*. 2018.
100cm d x 35cm h. chiffon fabric, bias binding, bobby pins, elastic bands, acrylic yarn, armature wire, bean bag, bean bag beads, fairy lights.

Right: *Heart beat neuron*. 2018.
200cm d. acrylic yarn, armature wire, heart beat recording, fairy lights, cable ties.





Neuron. 2018. 664cm x 910cm. archival inkjet print, wooden frame, crystal clear glass.



Left: *Synapse*, 2018. 115cm x 115cm.
chiffon fabric, bias binding, pima
cotton, snap fasteners, tea strainer,
hoola hoop, wooden frame.

Right: *Alzheimer's memory*, 2018
16cm d x 3cm h. glass petri dish,
vintage brooch, cotton threads.





Internal landscapes

Michael Wardell

Chrys Zantis comes from a long line of women artists who, over the past fifty or so years, have questioned established definitions of art, blurring the constructed boundary between art and craft and re-evaluating technical skills that have traditionally been considered 'women's work'. In the 1970s, feminist artists like Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro drew our attention to the public perception of valuing the craftsmanship inherent in painting and sculpture above the more traditionally feminine skills of knitting and needlework. In a much cited article in the feminist magazine *Heresies*, (*Waste Not, Want Not: An Inquiry into What Women Saved and Assembled – Femmage*, *Heresies* 1 no.4, Winter 1977-78) Miriam Schapiro and fellow artist Melissa Meyer introduced the word 'Femmage' into the modern lexicon describing the use of collage, stitched and sewn material and domestic female iconography in contemporary art. They traced its origins from such contrasting worlds as Victorian English ladies' artistic albums of photographs, pressed flowers, children's hair, fabric scraps and other memorabilia embellished with watercolour borders and decorative scenes or from American colonial women's folk arts and crafts, saving and combining precious scraps of cloth to create something that could be

decorative or useful or both. In what they politely call 'hierarchical sympathies' they lament how cultural historians downplay the significance of this alternative history:

"Mainstream is the codification of ideas for the illumination of history and the teaching of the young. What a shame that the young remain ignorant of the vitality of women's art. Yet the culture of women will remain unrecognized until women themselves regard their own past with fresh insight."

Combining the cerebral wit of conceptual art with the dexterity of craft skills such as knitting, crochet and embroidery, Zantis has, in a number of exhibitions, explored the female archetype; the female body and the role of the female in our society. She has examined what it means to be a woman: an artist, a business woman, a sexual being, a spiritual being, a passionate cook, a Greek Australian, a housewife, a mother and, at times, a woman coping with health problems. It was after medical tests and viewing test results that sparked Zantis' interest in the internal body; the complex microscopic world of microbes, neurons and dendrites down to the even more microscopic world of DNA.

In the exhibition *Internal landscapes* giant pink knitted neurons climb the walls and spread across the floor lit up like Christmas trees with little lights woven into their dendrites. Suspended from the ceiling and from brackets on the wall are circular works in dyed and stitched silk chiffon, inspired by the circular views seen through a microscope. Some have protruding sacs where the silk has been boiled with circular objects sewn into the fabric so that when they are unpicked after drying the fabric retains the 'memory' of the circular addition.

Since the ancient Greeks, philosophers and artists have developed theories around the idea of the human body, the microcosm reflecting the patterns and energies of the universe, the macrocosm. While these metaphysical ideas went out of fashion with the increase in scientific and medical knowledge in the 19th Century, the similarities between the microscopic world and patterns in nature have become all the more striking with advances in microscopic imaging and details of the earth's surface seen from space.

Inspired by an image of human DNA as if seen from the top of a DNA

double helix, Zantis was surprised by the similarity between the complex pattern this created and the patterns in her grandmother's fine crochet work. She was excited by the concept that these beautifully crafted doilies that she inherited from her grandmother could be images of the DNA that was also passed down in her family. Perhaps it was from this same grandmother that Zantis inherited a skill and passion for fine knitting, crochet and needlework. Included in *Internal landscapes* are a group of works where Zantis has taken some of her grandmother's doilies and added her own work around the circumference to create smaller neurons to join the installation of larger ones.

Exploring further into the microscopic world of the body, Zantis discovered more and more parallels between the creation of our internal organs and processes inherent in her chosen medium. She noticed how medical terminology is rich with textile metaphors such as 'knit', 'ladder', 'threads' and 'fibers'. As our bodies grow from stem-cells each self-replicating and combining to create specific organs, so too Zantis' artworks grow from a single stitch which is

replicated over and over until the required shape is formed.

Much of the feminist art of the sixties and seventies was a reaction against the male dominated artworld and society in general after several centuries of cultural history and taste being dictated by male historians, critics, dealers and museum curators and directors. Some of the early, most purposefully feminist works were deliberately aggressive and at times dogmatic, designed to jolt the viewer out of preconceived ideas and question deeply ingrained human values. Some would argue that we still have a long way to go but the artworld, at least, is not so obviously male dominated and artists like Chrys Zantis can develop these ideas and extend our appreciation of traditional crafts without preaching. To borrow a metaphor from Zantis' other passion, cooking, she has successfully blended ideas about the complex microscopic world of the human body with ideas about women's strengths and their value in our society, spiced and sweetened by her characteristic humour and charm.

Left: *Hold That Thought*. (detail).



Personal Growth. 2018. 150cm d. conduit pipe, bias binding, acrylic, wools and cotton yarns.



Left: *Stem cell neuron*. 2018.
13cm d x 3cm h. glass petri dish, wool
felt, crochet cottons.

Right: *Fired up neurons*.
(installation). 2018. 700cm x 900cm.
acrylic, wools and cotton yarns,
armature wire, fairy lights, bean
bag, bean bag beans, chiffon fabric,
cable ties.





Branching dendrites. 2018. 83cm d. chiffon fabric,
bias binding, wool, sewing threads.