

Artist-Statement Steph Marx

I grew up in Germany, the eldest of 9 children to a single-mother who moved towns every two years; there was no space for individuality. My moment of inspiration came from a school art project in which we could paint with a professional artist. I knew: that is me, I want to paint. I was always told 'that is not something for people like us. It's a hobby.' And so it remained for years. Instead of pursuing painting I studied politics and history, nourished my interests in reading and languages - but never felt truly at ease. This finally changed in 2011 when I left for an Erasmus-year in France, land of the impressionists and surrealists. There, I was no longer pushed into any roles, and I was overwhelmed by my new freedom. I restarted painting and never stopped since. It grew with the years, until I had to admit: I am an artist, I paint. My paintings are a psychological journey through the human soul. I work in series, as all my paintings are part of my process to overcome the mechanisms of my mental illness. I am inspired by the nature that surrounds me, my extensive readings on psychotherapy and my own experiences with therapy. I create abstract acrylic and oil paintings, which become more and more figurative as I advance in my mental development. Colors are a key factor to understanding my work. Red is my color for pain. Blue is Sadness and Depression. Yellow stands for Sickness. Green is the newest color in the palette: the Unknown, Change. My mission is to learn and understand more of myself, to visualize what many people have no words for, to overcome my mental struggles, to be true to myself, and to show others they can do so too.

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