

= Crocheted Olek =

Crocheted Olek (born 5 April 1978 , full name Agata Oleksiak , and also known as Olek) is a Polish @-@ born artist living in the United States . Her works include sculptures , installations such as crocheted bicycles , inflatables , and fiber art . Her best known piece is a false apartment in which the contents , including the residents , were covered in crocheting . It was featured in various international media outlets . The work generally includes members of the public or the media , crocheted directly into the suit without traditional fasteners .

Crocheted Olek had exhibited in the United States , United Kingdom , Germany , Brazil , Turkey , France , Italy , Poland , and Costa Rica .

= = Early life and career = =

Oleksiak graduated with a degree in Cultural Studies from Adam Mickiewicz University , Poznań , Poland , from 1997 to 2000 . Attending LaGuardia College , she won the National Arts Club 's award for sculpture . Her early work included sculptures , costumes , and inflatables .

Oleksiak first used crocheting as part of her art in 2003 after moving to the United States . She " wowed critics " at the Williamsburg Arts and Historical Society Surrealist Fashion Show that year . In 2004 , Oleksiak created " a large tentlike piece made of crocheted strips of cloth , hair , cassette tape and stuffed animals " work for a four @-@ person show . The New York Times said this work gave the show at 5BE Gallery in Chelsea , Manhattan , " a tour @-@ de @-@ force center to work around . " Her crocheted sculpture " Spill " (2005) , featured in the Washington Post , included 1 @,@ 300 skinny white balloons cascading in an " intestinal shape " . She participated in The Waterways , a " socially conscious " art project on a vaporetto water bus during the 2005 Venice Biennale ; her work , called " Camouflage " , " exploring the androgyny of fixed identity , sexuality , and culture " . In September and October of that year , Olek crocheted the windows of a burned @-@ out , abandoned building near her artist residency in Utica , New York . During this period , her costumes for theatre and dance performances drew critical praise , although a dance performance relating to one of her sculptures was criticized .

= = Notable works = =

Crocheted Olek 's crocheted full body clothing , dubbed " wearable sculptures " , has been used in various projects where Olek took her participants onto the New York City Subway . Crocheted Olek 's DUMBO Arts Festival piece was " Painting to Shake Hands " on an " event score " in Yoko Ono 's Grapefruit . Participants wore her sculptures and placed a hand through a stretched canvas to shake the hands of passers @-@ by . A second performance was dubbed " Crocheted Grapefruit " . Performance piece " Thank You for Your Visit , Have a Nice Day " , performed on Manhattan 's 14th Street during the 2009 event , Art in Odd Places : SIGN , was inspired " by a uniformed attendant holding a " Hold the Handrail " sign in a Taipei metro station " . Performers held placards based on signs noticed by Crocheted Olek that were " emphatic , ironic or amused dialogue with their location . "

In 2009 , she stated :

I think crochet , the way I create it , is a metaphor for the complexity and interconnectedness of our body and its systems and psychology . The connections are stronger as one fabric as opposed to separate strands , but , if you cut one , the whole thing will fall apart . Relationships are complex and greatly vary situation to situation . They are developmental journeys of growth , and transformation . Time passes , great distances are surpassed and the fabric which individuals are composed of compiles and unravels simultaneously .

While some have drawn parallels between Crocheted Olek 's artwork and yarn bombing , she does not consider her works to be such ; she told the New York Times in 2011 that : " I don 't yarn bomb , I make art . If someone calls my bull a yarn bomb , I get really upset . Lots of people have aunts or grandmas who paint . Do you want to see that work in the galleries ? No . The street is an extension

of the gallery . Not everyone 's work deserves to be in public " . In 2009 , she was a resident artist at Brazil 's Instituto Sacatar .

Crocheted Olek 's first solo exhibition , " Knitting is for Pus * * * * " , was held at Christopher Henry Gallery . Crocheted Olek 's apartment installation took years to prepare using yarn skeins . It was originally scheduled to run from 9 September 2010 , to 17 October 2010 , but because of a series of extensions it closed in May 2011 . During that period , the gallery exhibited her work at the SCOPE Art Show in Miami . After the exhibition closed , Crocheted Olek said she wanted to sell the work for \$ 90 @ , @ 000 .

In late December 2010 , Crocheted Olek installed a crocheted suit over " Charging Bull " (1989) , a statue on Wall Street , as a tribute to Arturo Di Modica , who installed the sculpture without permission . A park caretaker tore the suit from the statue two hours later . Crocheted Olek was the 2010 @ - @ 2011 Workspace artist @ - @ in @ - @ residence at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council , during which she created and performed at the Whitney Museum of American Art . In May 2011 , she won the " Sculpture In Situ " category at the second Urban Arts Awards (Artaq) .

In August 2011 , Crocheted Olek held a solo exhibition at Jonathan LeVine Gallery . She collaborated director Gina Vecchione and producer Michelle Price to create a short silent film called YARNANA , through Kickstarter @ - @ based fundraising . " Inspired by the silent film genre , it relies solely on powerful music , sound design and physical expression . The characters speak through modern dance , physical comedy , capoeira , martial arts , poi , belly dancing , breakdance , acrobatics , gymnastics and the instincts of soul searchers . " The project 's funding was ultimately canceled on Kickstarter , but the film was still created , and it won a film festival award . Her first solo exhibition in the United Kingdom , called " I do not expect to be a mother but I do expect to die alone " , was influenced by her experiences while she lived there .

Crocheted Olek changed materials for a joint exhibition with David E. Peterson in New York City ; she used thousands of semi @ - @ inflated balloons , crocheted like yarn to create a cave @ - @ like structure inside the gallery . The artist noted her love of the ephemeral nature of the medium ; the balloons often popped during the creation of the installation , and required immediate repair to prevent it unraveling entirely . The installation will gradually wither . She said that balloons represent " the happiest moments in life ? which are often just as impermanent " . Some visitors noted a pungent scent of latex . Crocheted Olek was inspired by her time as a traveling clown for Health Plus , when she would visit poor New York neighborhoods . She had previously used balloons during her residency in Brazil .

Crocheted Olek is due to exhibit work at Renwick Gallery in a show titled 40 under 40 : Craft Futures between 20 July 2012 to 3 February 2013 , after which the gallery plans to tour the show . Crocheted Olek 's creative philosophy is that " Life and art are inseparable . "

= = 2011 arrest = =

On 6 October 2011 , Crocheted Olek and an aggressive man were involved in an incident in London . She had just donated a work to a charity show when she was arrested and charged with unlawful wounding , unlawful wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm (GBH) and two counts of possessing a bladed article in a public place . Crocheted Olek was tagged with an ankle monitor , was under house arrest for over a month , but was allowed to attend a show in Poland . She did not talk about the situation . A trial took place in September 2012 at Southwark Crown Court . She was found not guilty of unlawful wounding with intent to cause GBH , but was found guilty of unlawful wounding and is due to be sentenced on 19 November 2012 . During this time , she taught Polish prisoners to crochet , and hopes to do the same when she returns to the US .