



Born Agata Oleksiak, in 1978, in industrial Poland, OLEK's art allowed her to leave her gritty, narrow-minded hometown of Silesia. Through colors and conceptual exploration, OLEK's art examines sexuality, feminist ideas, and the evolution of communication, all with meticulous detail and total candor. OLEK consistently pushes the boundaries of fashion, art, crafts, and public art, fluidly combining the sculptural and the fanciful. With the old-fashioned technique of crocheting, she has taken the ephemeral medium of yarn to express everyday occurrences and inspirations, thus creating a metaphor for the complexity and interconnectedness of our bodies and our psychological processes. OLEK's bursts of bright colors often mask political and cultural critiques woven into the fibers of installations, mirroring her respect for artists and writers. She highlights that which already exists in real time, in our environment.

As an active supporter of women's rights, sexual equality, and freedom of expression, OLEK has used the broad appeal of her work to display her solidarity with those stifled by oppressive laws worldwide. Through her body of work, OLEK has always sought to bring color and life, energy, and surprise to the living space. OLEK's work has been exhibited in galleries, museums, and public spaces worldwide, from Art Basel and Wynwood Walls in Miami to the Brooklyn Museum in New York and The Smithsonian in Washington DC. OLEK currently lives and works in Brooklyn.

## **EDUCATION**

**2000** Adam Mickiewicz University. Poznan, Poland. BA in Cultural Studies.

## **AWARDS**

**2016** Awesome Without Borders Grant

**2014** Hans Nefkens Fashion on the Edge, Rotterdam, Netherlands

**2011** Sculpture In Situ, Artaq Award, Paris, France

**2011** FUND LMCC Grant for performance in public spaces, New York, NY

**2009** Award from the *National Endowment for the Arts*, Chashama. New York, NY

**2008** Winner of Apex Art Gallery's PBS commercial competition, New York, NY

**2007** USArtists International, support for performing arts at international festivals, USA/Poland

**2004** The Ruth Mellon Memorial Award For Sculpture, The National Arts Club, New York, NY

## **RESIDENCIES**

**2016** Fully-funded residency at Villa Alliv, Marseille, France

**2015-16** Two-month artist-in-residency, Instituto Sacatar, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil

**2010** Nine-month artist-in-residency. Workspace, LMCC, New York, NY

- 2010** Six-month artist-in-residency, Artists Alliance, Lower East Side Rotating Studio Program, New York, NY
- 2009** Two-month artist-in-residency, full fellowship, Instituto Sacatar, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil
- 2005** Two-month fully funded artist-in-residency, Sculpture Space, Utica, NY

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2014** *Reality, what a concept!* Soho Grand Hotel, New York, NY
- 2014** *Let's Not Get Caught, Let's Keep Going*, Stolen Space Gallery, London, UK
- 2014** *I haven't a single explorer on my planet*, White Walls Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2013** *Santa Ágatha, la torera*, Delimbo Gallery, Sevilla, Spain
- 2013** *The End Is Far*, Jonathan LeVine Gallery, New York, NY
- 2012** *I do not expect to be a mother but I do expect to die alone*, Tony's Gallery, London, England
- 2011** *The Bad Artists Imitate, The Great Artists Steal*, Jonathan LeVine Gallery, New York, NY
- 2010** *Knitting is For Pus\*\*\*\**. Christopher Henry Gallery, New York, NY
- 2010** *Kiss Me, I Crochet*, LIU Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2010** *99 Cents*, G-Train, Brooklyn, NY
- 2009** *Just Bring Your Clothes*, Supported in part by an award from the *National Endowment for the Arts*, Chashama, New York, NY
- 2009** *We Mock What We Don't Understand*, Marmara Gallery, New York, NY
- 2009** *10% What Happens to You, 90% How You React to It*, The Project Space, Brooklyn, NY
- 2008** *Text Machine*, 45 Bleeker Street Theatre, New York, NY
- 2008** *Plum Blossom is Beautiful. Blossom is Temporary*, BBBP, Bronx, NY

## MUSEUMS

- 2017** *Identity*, Avesta Museum, Avesta, Sweden
- 2017** *We Broke Night*, performance piece for a private multisensory museum preview, UrbanNation Museum, Berlin, Germany
- 2017** *Lace and Luxury*, Salo Art Museum, Salo, Finland
- 2017** *Turn the Page: The First Ten Years of Hi-Fructose*, Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento, CA
- 2017** Commissioned Performance Piece, Akron Art Museum, Akron, OH
- 2016** *Yarn Visions*, Kerava Art Museum, Kerava, Finland
- 2016** *Structures*, Avesta Museum, Avesta, Sweden
- 2016** *Turn the Page: The First Ten Years of Hi-Fructose*, Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art. Virginia Beach, VA
- 2015** *Crocheted canoe*, Pow! Wow! Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, HI
- 2015** *Kiss me, I crochet*, Brooklyn Museum Artists Ball, The Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY
- 2014** *The Future of Fashion is Now*, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 2014** *Sleep with the Fishes*, Honolulu Museum of Art. Honolulu, HI
- 2014** Brooklyn Museum Artists Ball, Brooklyn, NY
- 2013-2014** Museum Villa Rot., Burgrieden, Germany
- 2012-2013** The Heinz Nixdorf Museums Forum, Paderborn, Germany
- 2012** *40 Under 40*. Renwick Gallery. Smithsonian American Art Museum. Washington, DC
- 2011** *A New Hook. Rethinking Needlework*. Museum Bellerive. Zurich, Switzerland
- 2010** *Bring Your Clothes*. Commissioned community-based performance. The Brooklyn Museum. Brooklyn, NY

- 2010** *Interwoven*. Evenings in Performance. The Textile Museum. Washington, DC  
**2009** *Tessituras*, Museu do Traje e do Têxtil at the Instituto Feminino da Bahia. Salvador, Brazil

## LECTURES and WORKSHOPS

- 2017** *The Art of Protest*, Panel Discussion, Mural Arts Philadelphia, Philadelphia, PA  
**2017** Artist's lecture and community crochet workshop for adults and children, with a focus on community activism around women's rights, Love Across the USA, Rochester & Auburn, NY  
**2016** Meet the Artist, a 10-month workshop, including elementary school to high school students, who participated in a public project, Virginia MOCA, Virginia Beach, VA  
**2016** Crochet as a Metaphor for Resistance: a Discussion of Olek's art, O.P. Jindal Global University, organized by: Centre for Human Rights Studies and the Gender Studies Reading Group, Near Jagdishpur Village, Sonipat, Haryana, India  
**2014** TEDx Warsaw, Multikino Zlote Tarasy. Warsaw, Poland  
**2014** Teaching crocheting at the municipal jail in Katowice, Poland and together with the inmates created a 20-meter-long crochet wall as part of OLEK's prison-outreach endeavor.  
**2010** 19th Annual Matrilineage Symposium at Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY  
**2009** LaGuardia Community College. Long Island City, NY  
**2009** Art Academy. Krakow, Poland  
**2008** Loyola University, Art and Environmental Studies, New Orleans, LA  
**2006** Public Art Symposium: "Beyond the Object," Colgate University, Hamilton, NY  
**2004-2005** The Material for the Arts, Performing Arts Workshops, New York

## SELECTED FESTIVALS AND FAIRS

- 2016** *You Can't Fool*, Mana Wynwood, Miami, FL  
**2015** New work, Scope Art Fair with Rumney Guggenheim, Miami, FL  
**2015** *Working women*, public performance, AIOP: recall, New York, NY  
**2015** *Crocheted Thrones*, Collective Design Fair with Todd Merrill Studio, New York, NY  
**2015** *You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming*, Hecho en Casa, Santiago, Chile  
**2015** St+art Delhi, New Delhi, India  
**2015** *Respiratory System (Crocheted Canoe)*, Pow! Wow! Honolulu, HI  
**2014** *Endless Outburst*, Miami Art Basel installation with Jeffery Deitch for Club Monaco, Miami, FL  
**2014** *Love Nest*, Miami Art Basel intervention, Standard Spa. Miami, FL  
**2014** *Too Hot To Handle*, Swab, Barcelona, Spain  
**2014** *Women on the walls* curated by Jeffrey Deitch, Wynwood Walls, Miami Art Basel. Miami, FL  
**2013** *Isis*, collaboration with Alice Mizrahi for Welling Court Walls, Queens, NY  
**2012** Installation for Bloop Festival, Ibiza, Spain  
**2012** Crocheted diggers for the Katowice Street Art Festival, Katowice, Poland  
**2012** Installation for PALP Festival, Martigny, Switzerland  
**2011** Scope Miami with Jonathan LeVine Gallery, Miami, FL  
**2011** *No Women, No Art*. Various Crocheted installations in Poznan, Poland  
**2011** *New work*, the American Pavilion, Shanghai Art Fair, China  
**2011** *Festival of Ideas for the New City*, The New Museum, New York, NY

- 2010 *Knitting is For Pus\*\*\*\**, Scope Art Fair with Christopher Henry Gallery, Miami, FL
- 2009 *Thank You for Your Visit, Have a Nice Day*, Art In Odd Places: SIGN, New York, NY
- 2008 *12th Annual Under the Bridge DUMBO Art Festival*, Brooklyn, NY
- 2007 XIV Annual International Contemporary Dance Conference and Performance Festival '07, Poland
- 2006 10<sup>th</sup> Under the Bridge D.U.M.B.O. Art Festival, Brooklyn, NY
- 2006 *Woman + Man = Creation - IV* International Woman Biennale, (in collaboration with Diego Britt) Costa Rica

## **SELECTED PUBLIC COMMISSIONED PROJECTS**

- 2016 *Good News*, Crocheted photorealistic of future good news circa 2020, Virginia MOCA, Virginia Beach, VA
- 2016 *Masked King*, Virginia MOCA, Virginia Beach, VA
- 2015 *Jan Karski Bench*, Consulate General of the Republic of Poland, New York, NY
- 2014 *There is no such thing as part freedom*. L.I.S.A. projects, New York, NY
- 2014 *"Pocaluj Przyszlosc" (Kiss the Future)*, Katowice, Poland
- 2014 *L.H.O.O.Q.* Paris, France
- 2014 *Fargo FX Bus*, New York, NY
- 2014 *Believe the Magic* for the Tipi Project, Brooklyn, NY
- 2013 *Miami Iron Side*, Miami, FL
- 2013 *Russia's Pride*, St. Petersburg, Russia
- 2013 *Absolute Open Canvas*, San Francisco, CA and New York, NY
- 2013 *Crochet Locomotive*, Lodz, Poland
- 2013 *El Sid*, Seville, Spain
- 2013 *Doggie Diner Heads*, San Francisco, CA
- 2012 *Happiness is an inside job*, installation commissioned by Elements. Hong Kong, China
- 2012 *Crocheted jacare*, SESC interlagos. Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 2003 *Pop Sustainability*, Greenwich Village Halloween Parade, NYC

## **SELECTED COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS**

- 2017 *Independence is Happiness*, Love Across the USA, Rochester, NY
- 2017 *Slavery is the Next Thing to Hell*, Love Across the USA, Auburn, NY
- 2016 *Our Pink House*, Avesta Museum, Avesta, Sweden
- 2016 *Our Pink House*, Kerava Museum, Kerava, Finland
- 2016 *Women Working in Pink*, public performance in collaboration with Maitri for International Women's Day, New Delhi, India

## **SELECTED UNCOMMISSIONED PUBLIC PROJECTS**

- 2016 *#I'm With Her*, Mana Urban Arts Project, New Jersey, NY
- 2014 *Time Bomb*, Museo Subacuatico de Arte. Isla Mujeres, Mexico
- 2014 *Be a voice not an echo*. Honolulu, HI
- 2014 *If the Men Could Get Pregnant, Abortion Would Be a Sacrament*. London, UK
- 2013 *Albert Einstein*. Washington, DC
- 2013 *Gato de Botero*. Barcelona, Spain
- 2012 *Cube in Astor Place*. New York, NY
- 2012 *Crocheted Minotaur*. Martigny, Switzerland
- 2010 *Wall Street Bull*, New York, NY

## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2017** *Trumpomania*, curated by curator19.90 and McCaig+Welles, Salomon Art Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016-2018** *Wars Come and Go and the Carousel is Always There to Remind Us of the Good Times*, Magic City, Traveling Exhibition in Dresden, Munich, and Stockholm
- 2016** *Thirty-Three: 33 Years of the Independent Spirit & the Sundance Film Festival*, curated by Morgan Spurlock, Kimball Arts Center, Park City, Utah
- 2016** *Hot Party Show*, curated by Queen Andrea and Melissa McCaig-Welles, 212 Arts Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016** *Group Show: RETNA, Swoon, Olek, AIKO, Pixelpancho, Jay Wes*. HG Contemporary, New York, NY
- 2016** *Urban Dawn II*, produced by curator19.90 at The Factory Lofts, Beirut, Lebanon
- 2016** *XX – A Moment in Time*, curated by Olly Walker & supported by Yasha Young, SAATCHI, London, UK
- 2015** *Some Place Like Home*, Rumney Guggenheim Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2015** *Surface By Soren Solkaer: Portraits And Paintings Of And By Street Artists*. Allouche Gallery. New York, NY
- 2014** *The Future of Fashion is Now*, Shanghai OCAT and Art and Design Gallery in OCT Shenzhen, China
- 2014** *Project M/6*. Urban Nation. Berlin, Germany
- 2014** *Art Truancy*. Jonathan Levine Gallery. New York, NY
- 2014** *Summer Times*. Curated by Miss Van at Yusto Giner Gallery. Marbella, Spain
- 2013** *The Animal Ball*. London, UK
- 2012** *Make Ends Meet*. Flanders Art Gallery. Raleigh, NC
- 2012** Installation for Anti-Slavery International's Follow Your Art – Street Art Against Slavery. Village Underground. London, England
- 2012** *Synthetic Nature*. Krause Gallery. New York, NY
- 2012** *Purple*. Causey Contemporary. Brooklyn, NY
- 2011** *Otulina*. Kordegarda Gallery. Warsaw, Poland
- 2011** *Miss Danger on the Loose: A Female Street Artist Exhibition*. Lab Art Gallery. Los Angeles, CA
- 2011** *Made Skateboard*. I-20 Gallery. New York, NY
- 2011** *Civilization and its Discontents*. Nars Gallery. Brooklyn, NY
- 2011** *Crest Fest*. Brooklyn, NY
- 2011** *Sing for Hope — Pop-up Pianos*. New York, NY
- 2011** *LaGuardia Community College Alumni Art Exhibition*. Experimental Space at Reis Studios. L.I.C., NY
- 2011** *Suffolk Deluxe Electric Bicycle*. Collaboration with Devan Harlen, NY Studio Gallery. New York, NY
- 2011** *The Sky is Pink, The Room Is Green*. Installation commissioned by Pacific Design Center. LA
- 2011** *Banzai*. Art and Performance Kaleidoscopic Adventure. Brooklyn, NY
- 2010** *Bite: Street Inspired Art and Fashion*. Third Streaming. New York, NY
- 2010** *Collected: Work Space*. Cuchifritos Gallery. New York, NY
- 2010** *T minus 20*. Christopher Henry Gallery and INGNITE. New York, NY
- 2010** *Weaving In and Out*. No Longer Empty. New York, NY
- 2010** *Non-Native NY*. Brooklyn, NY
- 2010** *Stand clear of the closing doors*. Pandemic Gallery. Brooklyn, NY

**2010** *Excess and Environment: sustainability in a world of consumption*. Art for Global Justice. L.I.C., NY  
**2010** *Glow II*. LKC, Z-Bar and streets. Berlin, Germany  
**2010** *Low Lives II — Crocheted Painting To Shake Hands*. One-night exhibition of performance-based works transmitted via the internet. Berlin, Germany  
**2010** *Crocheted Windows*. ABC No Rio. New York, NY  
**2009** *100% Acrylic 11.07.09 (after Jan van Eyke)*. Part of SAVOIR-FAIRE, the first annual performance series featuring the work of women artists. Soho20 Gallery. New York, NY  
**2009** *Covers*. The Lab Gallery. New York, NY  
**2009** *Zakamarki, BWA*. Galeria Sanocka. Sanok, Poland (catalog)  
**2009** *Viceroy Art*. Viceroy Hotel. Miami, FL  
**2009** *Haute-Kraft*. Posie Kviat Gallery. Hudson, NY  
**2009** NY ART BEAT First Anniversary Exhibition. DAC. Brooklyn, NY  
**2009** *Women Forward*. WAH Center. Brooklyn, NY (catalog)  
**2008** *How the book is made*. New Orleans Biennale. New Orleans, LA  
**2008** *TATENT PReVIEW 09*. White Box. New York, NY  
**2008** *The (Self) Promotion Show*. Apexart. New York, NY  
**2008** *U R HERE*. Installation for Artichoke Dance Company. Brooklyn, NY  
**2008** *Practical to Poetic: Fiber Invitational*. Curated by Ogunsanya. The Art Center. St. Petersburg, FL (catalog)  
**2008** *Women's Vision, Women's Voices*. St. Mark's Church. New York, NY  
**2007** *Made in MFTA*. Citibank. L.I.C., NY  
**2007** *ARTHaus*. Miami, FL  
**2007** *The Liberator* — collaborative work with Naomi White. Supreme Trading Gallery. Brooklyn, NY  
**2007** *Attempting the Impossible*. Anthology Film Archives. Curated by Joseph Latimore. New York, NY  
**2007** *Borborygami*. Installation for Mehr Gallery. New York, NY  
**2007** *Interventions at Colgate University. 30th Anniversary of Sculpture Space*. Hamilton, NY  
**2007** *and Company*. New 42nd Street Studios. The Construction Company, NY  
**2007** *1000 nows*. Shua Group. Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church. New York, NY  
**2007** *Laboratorio di danza contemporanea*. Venice, Italy  
**2006** *Contingencies of the Real*, PhotoNY, NYC  
**2006** *Sculpture inside out - 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sculpture Space*, Hamilton Collage, NY  
**2006** *Wearable Sculpture nr 7*, performance, Construction Company, NYC  
**2006** *Drawing the line against domestic violence*, Claire Oliver Fine Art, NYC  
**2006** *Entertaining Science*, performance, Cornelia Street Café, NYC  
**2006** *Speed Limit*, Redhead, LMCC, NYC  
**2006** *Beyond the Object* – symposium and performance at Colgate University, NY  
**2005** *Kabatasz Port and artSumer gallery* – project for 9<sup>th</sup> International Istanbul biennale, Istanbul, Turkey  
**2005** *Waterways 2005 / an intervention aboard the vaporetto docked at the entrance to la Biennale di Venezia*, Venice, Italy  
**2005** *Work – In – progress reception*, Sculpture Space, Utica, NY  
**2005** *Acrylic 100%/ performance for charity event in Sculpture Space*, Utica, NY  
**2005** *Performance (two camouflage man playing ping pong)* at Beautiful Modern, LIC, NY  
**2005** *Micro-Scope*, Southampton, NY  
**2005** *The New Beasts*, Chelsea Hotel, NYC  
**2005** *13.000 crocheted balloons*, Transformer Gallery, Washington, D.C.  
**2004** *The day after...*, Oliver Kamm 5BE Gallery, NYC  
**2004** *Windows in Crochet*, Christ Church Neighborhood House, Life Arts Festival, Philadelphia

- 2004** *Karada To Ugoki*, Kurier Plus Gallery, Brooklyn, NY
- 2004** Crocheted mixed media installation, Festival of Independent Dance Artist, Toronto (Canada)
- 2004** .....(NEO-CON)EY Island Block Party and Fashion Show, NY
- 2004** Crocheted mixed media installation for PROJECT, Metropolitan Pavilion, NYC
- 2004** *Mulysa*, The Construction Company, NYC
- 2003** Swimming Pool Installation #1, Swimming pool at LaGuardia Community Collage, NY
- 2003** The National Art Club's 28th Annual Art Show, Ruth Mellow Memorial Award for Sculpture, NYC
- 2003** Surrealist Fashion Show, Williamsburg Art and Historical Society, NY

## **SELECTED COSTUME AND SET DESIGN**

- 2008** *Second Skin*, Carrie Ahern Dance Company, Dance Space, St. Mark's Church, NYC
- 2006** *Web*, Artichoke Dance Company, NYC
- 2006** *If The Shoe Fits*, Winter Garden, The World Financial Center, NYC
- 2006** *Looks Good on Paper*, in collaboration with Rachel Cohen and Christine Javers, The World Financial Center, NYC
- 2006** *Fictions*, Anita Chang Dance Company, Joyce Soho, NYC
- 2006** *Happeningistime*, in collaboration with Ginger Wagg, Spare Room, Baltimore, MD
- 2005** *Spill #3*, in collaboration with Ginger Wagg and Jane Jerardi, Gala Theatre – Tivoli, Washington D.C
- 2005** *Box 7.1*, in collaboration with Laura Quattrocchi, Austin, Texas
- 2005** *Inside and out*, Biarritz Dance Festival, Biarritz, France
- 2005** *Play*, Adele Meyers and Dancers, Merce Cunningham Studio, NYC
- 2005** *Look at me*, Artichoke Dance Theatre, Joyce Soho, NYC
- 2005** *Lift/* in collaboration with Anita Cheng, Brooklyn Public Library, NY
- 2005** *Emptiness of Snow*, Kun-Yang Lin, Mulberry Theatre, NYC
- 2005** *Table #2*, Tresh Dance, Queens Museum of Art, NY
- 2005** *If the shoe fits*, racoco productions, Walkerspace, NYC
- 2004** *Awakening Dancing Goddesses*, Moving Arts Projects, Merce Cunningham Studio, NYC
- 2004** *racoco and the it girls*, The Slipper Room, NYC
- 2004** *1,000 nows*, Shua Group, Philadelphia Live Arts Festival, PA
- 2004** *racoco productions*, Mix Art Myrys, Toulouse (France)
- 2004** *After Mulysa*, Laura Quattrochi, Williamsburg Art and Historical Society, NY
- 2004** Anita Cheng, Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church, NYC
- 2004** *Do I Dare?*, Ariane Anthony and Company, Henry Street Settlement, NYC
- 2004** *racoco productions*, Clemente Soto Velez Cultural Center, Pantheon Theatre, NYC
- 2004** *Beach A*, Laura Quattrochi, West End Theatre, NYC
- 2004** *Looks Good on Paper*, Moving Arts Projects, Paul Taylor Studio, Joyce Soho, NYC
- 2004** Shua Group, Echo Arts, Cyprus (Greece)
- 2004** *A Chicken's Dream of Flight*, Ariane Anthony and Company, New 42nd St. Studios, NYC
- 2004** *1000 nows*, Shua Group, Danspace Project at St. Mark's Church, NYC
- 2004** Laboratorio di danza contemporanea, Venice (Italy)
- 2004** *Event Horizon*, Layard Thompson, Joyce Soho, NYC
- 2003** *The Soldier's Tale*, Stravinsky Carnival, Ariane Anthony & Carolyn Lord, NYC
- 2003** *A place where there is no fear*, Virginia Valdes, Robert Back Memorial Cinema, NYC
- 2003** *Why Imagine Golden Birds*, Ariane Anthony and Company, The Construction Company, NYC

**2003** *Terrestrial*/ Shua Group, The Construction Company, NYC

**2003** *After Hours*, Kelly Kocinski, WAX, Boston University, Galapagos, Mary Anthony Dance Theater

**2003** racoco productions, Williamsburg Art and Historical Society, Williamsburg Dance Festival, NY

**2003** *Crack, We're Nine Sided*/Shua Group, Camden City Theatre, Camden, NJ

**2003** *Evil Hell Cat and Other Lurid Tales*, Nasadiva Productions, 78th Street Theatre Lab, NYC