

PRACTICE STATEMENT:

My background is in Philosophy and Fine Art, which I studied both in Poland and the UK. Over the last ten years I have developed my practice through formal art education (BA and MA programmes), art residencies, collaborative projects and independent studio practice. I produce and show my work internationally, working within and outside institutions, and consequently engaging with a variety of different audiences.

Up until now my practice has predominantly centred on video, photography and performance. More recently I have expanded my work to incorporate sound, sculptural forms and installation.

Politics and feelings have been a driving force behind the development of my practice. I am most influenced by my experiences as a woman, queer, Eastern European and an immigrant and these are themes I regularly explore. The starting point is often autobiographical experiences, which I then expand into inter-subjective dialogues, tapping into ideas of collective memory, desires and shared vulnerabilities.

In the early stages of my work (2008 - 2012) I explored relational aesthetics and photo-therapy methodologies (as defined by Jo Spence). Aside from the final work – which took the form of photographic prints - I was interested in the performative process that evolved out of the photo shoot. In works *Stadium and Punctum* (2008), *New Start Quotes* (2010) and *A Tale of Backtracking and looping* (2012) I investigated how this process could be used as a self care tool, through sharing, intimacy and healing. Body image - as experienced by the subject through the intersection of personal histories, identity and cultural norms - was at the centre of these works.

Investigating the healing potential of art and its capacity to move through vulnerabilities has remained an important part of my practice. Over the last five years I have complemented this with an exploration of the potentiality of affect as a tool for registering and archiving both present continuous and past historical moments, i.e. placing an emphasis on the theoretical and artistic methodologies that make subjugated knowledges (as defined by Foucault) visible and on narratives that explore the potential of re-writing the future through a re-writing of history.

Your Dearest Wish (2015), a three channel video installation made up of six durational performances, explores experiences of exhaustion and hope. The body in this work becomes a storytelling vehicle that is shaped by dialogues of embodied encounters, socio – political visual codes and transient spaces. *Niolam Ja Se Kochaneczke* (2016) explores the relationship between history, “national values” and power structures, revisiting Eastern European folk traditions and employing feminist and queer reading to question why queer love hasn’t been preserved and celebrated in folk history. By doing so I encourage the viewer to consider and experience history as a discourse made out of multiple, overlapping and contesting narratives rather than as a single, fixed entity.

While continuously revisiting hope, affect, vulnerability and strategies of coping with situations of crisis - political or personal – my recent works have become increasingly engaged with text and semantics. *Vulnerable* (2017), a sound piece presented as an installation, is a collection of 142 exchanges with participants who tell me how to pronounce ‘*vulnerable*’ properly. The work reflects upon the relationship between language, power structures, social mobility and vulnerability. It was made in response to the hate crime killing of Polish man Arkadiusz Jozwik on 27th August 2016 in Harlow, UK shortly after the Brexit vote.

With affectual discourses remaining the focus of my current work, I have also been developing aesthetical methodologies that explore radical modes of collecting as sites with the potential for critical engagement in the development of cultural identity, revisionist histories and new narratives. I am particularly interested in the ways that these methodologies of accumulation can engage viewers emotionally. *One in a million* (WIP) sees me collecting failed scratch cards, traces of failed hope that I preserve in empty sauerkraut jars. A collection of failed hopes and failed economies.

I completed my MA studies with a dissertation exploring the relationship between contemporary notions of utopia, hope and horizon - ‘wish landscapes’ (as defined by Ernst Bloch). I am interested in how the contemporary status of utopia is explored, enacted and contested in critical theory of arts. I am particularly interested in the present-day utopian formations influenced by queer (i.e. Jose Esteban Munoz), feminist (i.e. Sara Ahmed) and post-colonial thinkers (i.e. Fred Moten). In view of those I investigated the epistemological transference from ‘utopian visions’ to ‘utopian feelings’ and consequently the shift from the spatially oriented notions of utopia to those that are time oriented and based in ‘utopian experiences’.

This research - that I am currently developing further - influenced ‘Happily Ever After’ (2018) series of performances realised in Wroclaw, Poland as part of ‘The Illusion of Return’ commission. A performative, fictional lesbian wedding that was exercising utopian strategies for ‘world imagining’ and ‘world building’. In contrast to ‘Niolam Ja Se Kochaneczke’ (2016) where I created a utopian past here I proposed a utopian future - capsulated in a temporary moment. As a further development work documentation is reactivated in a new video work that contests that temporary utopian moment with the dystopian reality of homophobic outbursts taking place on streets of Poland.

Seeking for aesthetical methodologies that problematize how history is written and tradition are represented continues to drive my practice. While using affectual tools I remain to question what the tradition is, whom does it belong to and how can it be reclaimed by those that are marginalised within it. Currently, through my research and practice, I am developing a notion of ‘tender crafts’, which is looking at how crafts can be revisited and re imagined from contemporary feminist, queer and diasporic (migrant) perspectives.