



Olivia Erlanger
The Oily Actor
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Between licking the inside and peeling back, desire, shipwrecked, oscillates.
Creaking open, splitting seams, a penny is always on the tongue.

One time I tried to grab it... Slippery, it flipped! Like a fresh caught fish smacking against a swift stream bed. There the tongue resides in its hollow bunker. Behind in a shallow pool, the lake of mind heaves, placidly, plastically, unbroken by oars.

As I attend to my other work, I turn its face down. Face down, I slowly leave fingermarks all over the soft and viscous interior. Clear as glass, each object that comes in contact becomes a grubby mark.

Satisfied, my surgical sight notices the surface has become arid, cracked, baked, split like a perfect madeira cake. I mask your topography. A new layer cloaks, compresses, what had begun to sag and spill.

Suturing, you start (and start) to appear.

Consider the Sleuth.

Who, as he snoops, steps quickly behind the lamppost becoming a line,
becoming a shadow.

He is the lamppost and the lamppost is the Sleuth.



Olivia Erlanger
The Oily Actor
Installation view



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Olivia Erlanger
Rip, 2016
Silicone, Wire, Foam



Olivia Erlanger
Pinch, 2016
Silicone, Wire, Foam



Olivia Erlanger

Raft of Burnt Ruby Copal, 2016

Ruby Copal in Resin Spills, Bee Pollen, Pleated Silk Prints, Saffron, Cast Shea Butter, Puzzle House, Pleated Vinyl, Wool, HDU Foam, Foam core, Steel

56 x 38 x 5 in



Olivia Erlanger
Raft of Burnt Ruby Copal, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft of Burnt Ruby Copal, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft of Burnt Ruby Copal, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft of Burnt Ruby Copal, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft of Burnt Ruby Copal, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger

Raft for The Doll in Glass, 2016

Silicone Rope with Octopus Tentacles, Palo Santo Pleated Silk Print, Cast Shea Butter, Puzzle House, Resin, Cardboard, Wool, HDU Foam, Foam core, Steel

71 x 52.5 x 5 in



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for The Doll in Glass, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for The Doll in Glass, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for The Doll in Glass, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for The Doll in Glass, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for The Doll in Glass, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger

Raft for Lotophagi, 2016

Abandoned Honeycomb, Bee, Honey Opera Glove, Plastic Bag, Lotus Leaves, Cast Shea Butter, Puzzle House, Resin, Cardboard, Wool, HDU Foam, Pleated Vinyl, Foamcore, Steel

53.5 x 36 x 5 in



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for Lotophagi, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for Lotophagi, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
Raft for Lotophagi, 2016
Detail



Olivia Erlanger
The Oily Actor
Installation view



Olivia Erlanger
I Am no Viper, Yet I Feed, 2016
Generative Sound Piece

<https://youtu.be/mUzD7Gxk3cE>

Background

In previous work I have built scaffoldings to house objects in a way that references the idea of compartmentalization. The past work has considered compartmentalization as a coping mechanism in a world infused with the stress of “hyperobjects.” A hyperobject (as defined by Timothy Morton) is an object that is so large and viscous that we can only consider it as an abstract concept. Thus we struggle dealing with them because they are never given the language of weight or density, and yet we are constantly under their force. An example of this is “The Global Financial Crisis” (GFC).

In the process of creating these scaffoldings I became an architect, in a manner of speaking. I built from the ground up into the atmosphere of the GFC, exploring the “macro” issues and impact such as questions of value and currency concepts that have been transformed by the GFC. Ultimately, I created rigid structures to reflect how a fluid network of flexible systems might look. While the objects and materials embedded within these structures have referenced many aspects of the GFC, the work did not focus on its origin or foundation, namely the housing crisis as it occurred “on the ground.”

The Oily Actor

The premise of the show, *The Oily Actor*, began in a different but related exploration of the concept of a foundation. Foundations are fundamental to structural integrity; they are the bounding perimeter and the base upon which you build, ensuring a structure’s integrity. The aim of these new works is to create a composite sculpture on a single foundational plane. A single plane removes the hierarchy of meaning which naturally occurs in a multi level structure.

The “foundations” are made of materials that relate to the origin of economy and trade. Each foundation has its own narrative. As they took shape, I began to consider each piece as a vessel of sorts, ferrying different materials each of which have embedded narratives that all relate back to the same interest in the origin of trade and commerce.

The idea of ferrying, of moving materials across space, led to the title “Rafts”. The pieces are made on the floor where there is a suggestion of movement, as if each piece is an ancient doht bringing textiles, exotic food and new technologies from one world to another. The raft is an enduring symbol with its own unique history and relationship to ideas of escape and salvation. Hence, the title.

My thinking is influenced by the essay, *Robinson Crusoe as Economic Man*, which suggests that Crusoe is the archetypical Marxist Economic Man.

“In Marx’s interpretation of capitalism, the laborer adds value to a product by transforming it so that it has a use. The capitalist takes the product produced by the laborer and sells it; he adds no value to the product and pays the laborer less than the value added by the laborer.”

Crusoe, as he exists on the island, begins as laborer and transforms himself via trade into a capitalist. Imagining materials at Crusoe’s disposal on his isolated island began to also influence the materials that are embedded within the works.

Wall Works

Raft of the Lotophagi at Pericles, Raft for The Doll in Glass, Raft of Burnt Ruby Copal

Shea Butter Bricks with Resin Puzzle Houses

A main theme in the show focuses on consumption. Each raft has a shea butter brick with the pieces of a 3D puzzle cast inside. The architecture inside is a map of the Wyndcliffe manor, the house from which the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses” originates. The puzzle houses are based off of 3D puzzles depicting gothic American manors, currently a popular children’s toy in China. The puzzles are incomplete, half done, falling apart. They are encapsulated in shea butter, a material known for its healing and soothing properties as well as a material of trade. The shea butter holds the manor in a state of decay similar to the condition of Wyndcliffe manor today.

Wool, Silk, Opera Gloves

Wearables have always been a key indicator of class and of status. A thick camel coat, a beautiful silk tie, all indicate a certain socioeconomic rank. As such I wanted to deconstruct the white collar uniform a suit. Wool paneling is included as a “base” on each of the rafts. Wool also has a rich history in commerce as it was one of the fundamental materials of trade in Europe during medieval times and is, in part, what made the United Kingdom a superpower.

Two of the works have embedded pleated digital prints on silk. The prints are of the interior of the Wyndcliffe Manor abandoned and in a state of disrepair. The idea of collapsing the architecture, folding it on itself plays against the simultaneously billowing, or expanding of the fabric. Silk is a pertinent material for it’s history with trade and founding routes for transmission and exchange between continents.

Raft for the Lotophagi also includes two opera gloves, one as if it was covered in honey and the other mashed inside a plastic bag with cast resin and lotus leaves. The opera glove is included in these pieces and has been included in others as it relates to leisure and status. It is an object that speaks to another time and has a certain kind of nostalgia.

Beehive and Bee Pollen

The beehive is an important insert as it relates to two architectural structures that inform many ideas behind the works.

The first of these is one of the earliest forms of money: the shekel. Originally the shekel was simply a specific weight of barley. It evolved into different coins and objects now referred to as “money”. The earliest banks or forms of storage for shekel were Jagah, and their form was based off of the construction of a beehive.

The second is Frank Lloyd Wright’s Hannah House. The beehive, was one of the inspirations for Wright’s architecture. Wright was one of the most influential architects in the rise of suburbia and his other, more generic floor plans, like that of the Robbie house, went on to become prototypical of American middle class sprawl.

Rope with Cast Octopus Tentacles

The rope is another reference to rafts as a means of transport. Rope is an essential tool when traveling by sea. The octopus tentacles were inspired by Marc Von Shegell’s Sundogz which I was reading while producing these pieces. Shegells describes a world, that is hallucinogenic in many ways; where consciousness is not embedded within any certain form. A main character in Sundogz is known as “The Doll”. The Doll is a kind of free floating, somewhat celaphapodlike creature that lives in a watery underworld on a distant planet.

Lotus Leaves, Burnt Copal, Palo Santo, Saffron

These materials are associated with a major trade route of antiquity known as the Incense Road. Similar to the Silk Road, it was comprised of a network of different routes, both by land and sea that connected Europe to the Middle East and Africa. The rise of many port cities such as ancient Alexandria in Egypt owe their development to the Incense Road. Copal and Palo Santo are both incense that have mystical properties. They are used ceremonially to provide clarity and expel bad spirits. Lotus leaves have also long been touted to have hallucinogenic and mystical properties. In Greek myths, Lotus Eaters were lulled to sleep into a deep kind of lethargy and apathy.

HDU Foam

A foam specific to rapid prototyping called HDU is also included in each of the works. I keep coming back to this material as its properties are unique: it is completely non reactive, fragile yet industrious and has the appearance of sand or stone. It is an inventor's material.

Sound Piece

I am No Viper, Yet I feed

The audio for the show is a generative sound piece that takes live data from Zillow, a common real estate listings site and distorts a playlist of 12 songs that relate from different years leading up to the Global Financial Crisis. The sound piece focuses on the Detroit Metro Area, each foreclosed house listed has five separate data points Price, Square Footage, Year Built, Longitude and Latitude. These data points all determine different aspects of how the songs are altered. Each day the same playlist plays but it never sounds the same. At the end of the project there will be a free archive to download the generated audio.

Black Tongues

Rip, Pinch

Another theme of the show is that of transition and mistranslation in sensory experience. The tongues stem from research I was conducting about the water shortage crisis and how it relates to overgrazing in the American Midwest and California. I originally created an oversized cow tongue to tease out this idea.

Within this show, the tongues have come to take a new meaning. They are tentacles, horns and are made of silicone a material commonly used in sex toys. Sex was one of the first industries accessible to women and one of the earliest forms of "trade" in the most basic sense.

Olivia Erlanger
b. 1990 New York, NY
lives and works in New York, NY

Solo and Two Person Exhibitions

2016

The Oily Actor, What Pipeline, Detroit

2015

Dog Beneath the Skin, Balice Hertling NY, New York, NY
Meat Eater, Seventeen Gallery, London, England

2014

Material Uncertainty Fluxia, Milan, Italy

2013

Material Studies II—A House Falls Apart, Important Projects, Oakland, CA
Squig on the Horizon, Appendix Project Space, Portland, OR

Group Exhibitions

2016

(Upcoming) Group show, Brown University, Providence, RI

2015

New Galerie at Material Art Fair, Mexico City
No Shadows in Hell, Pilar Corrias, London, England
Centre For Style U.S. Tour, Centre for Style, New York, New York
Drawing I Fridge, Greene Exhibitions, Los Angeles, California
Under a Thawing Lake, Dark Arts International, Mexico City, Mexico
NADA NYC with Grand Century, New York, New York

2014

The Go Between, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples, Italy
Today: Morrow, Balice Hertling, New York, NY
Man v. Evolution, Galerie Hussenot, Paris, France
Far Dolce Niente, Marbriers 4, Geneva, Switzerland
AirBnB Pavilion, 14th Venice Architecture Biennale, (curated by Alessandro Bava) Venice, Italy
Ever Y Thing Zen (curated by Important Projects), Jancar Jones, Los Angeles, CA
Executive Producer, Museum of Contemporary Art Oaxaca, Oaxaca, Mexico
Solo Project at Frieze NYC, New York, New York

2013

Breathing Kevlar, Perforated Skin V4ULT, Berlin, Germany
Illuminated iDENTITY
Images Festival, XSpace Images Festival, Toronto, Canada

2012

Power.Hour, Atrium, Yale University New Haven, CT
Songs on Conceptual Art, Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA

Curatorial

CoDirector at Grand Century, New York, NY

Grants and Nominations

Rema Hort Nominee, 2015, New York City, NY

SAAB Grant, Lewis and Clark College, Spring 2011, Portland, Oregon

Lectures and Talks

Smoke and Mirrors: Staged Arguments and the Legitimation of Artistic Research” NIDA Doctoral School, October 2015, Lithuania

Stay with Me with AirBNB Pavilion, Idea City sponsored by New Museum, June 2015, New York City, NY

Residencies

Rupert, Fall 2015, Vilnius, Lithuania Anderson Ranch, Winter 2013, Snowmass, Colorado

Press and Publications

Artist Portfolio, Bomb Magazine (Online) 2015

SculptureCenter Notebook, New York, 2015

Hermes III, Hermes PDF, London, 2015

Aesthetics and Anaesthetics by Tracy Jeanne Rosenthal, Los Angeles January 2015

2014 Top 10 Artworks at Frieze London, Artspace, October 2014

One Day at Frieze, Novembre Magazine, October 2014

Olivia Erlanger on Grand Century, Flash Art, October 2014

Material Uncertainty Review by Barabara Cassavecchi, Frieze Magazine June 2014

On View: A Satellite Show...AirBnB Pavillion, TMagazine, May 2014

Arte de PostInternet, Il Sole, April 2014 Material Uncertainty, cura., April 2014

Material Uncertainty, Mousse Magazine, April 2014

Breathing Kevlar Perforated Skin, Dis Magazine 2014

Material Studies II, Art Blog Art Blog, January 2014

Olivia Erlanger, ilikethisart.net, January 2, 2014

Breathing Kevlar Perforated Skin, AQNB, 2014

When All of My Friends Are Online, <http://allmyfriendsatonce.com/#18>

Artist of the Week: Olivia Erlanger, LVL3, October 7, 2013

Forecast: InfoPunkt Leipzig, September, 2013

Looking At, Looking At, Medium Cool, August, 2013

Reading at Heathers: Top Picks, Gallerist NY, August, 2013

Images Festival Catalogue, Toronto, Canada, April, 2013

HEAVY METAL and Britney Spears, Publication Studio LA Art Book Fair, Los Angeles 2012

Artlandia, Artcards Review, July 17, 2012