

28 of June 2019,

6th day in Italy, first time in this country. Crocheting copper wire purchased and brought from Mexico to New York to Lecce. I make many granny squares. I began making these copper squares in New York when I agreed to spend a month here in Puglia to work on a solo show at Jamie Sneider's new Progetto in Lecce. I am slowly but consistently working on joining the squares by sewing them into a copper lace t-shirt.

I crochet everywhere I can, almost daily, especially while traveling. I imagine the people of a village in Mexico who weave straw hats while walking from town to town, they can tell you that the distance from one town to the next is the equivalent of any number of hats woven while walking.

I constantly learn and make new crochet patterns; they become labyrinths I get lost in, only to find myself. A single strand of wire is looped in around itself with the help of a steel hook, becoming an organized network, with occasional mistakes. I embrace them and keep them to break up the monotony.

No two crochet doilies are alike; they are trips I have taken. I unpack them and lay them out to measure and visualize the time and distance from one place to another, from a couple hours, days, months, to years, to the places I have been while making them.

I'm working on new terracotta sculptures, made of local clay from Grottaglie, a ceramic village. I don't know what I am making but feel the need to coil and press each coil onto itself, rotating each piece, going around and around, just like the movements of crochet.

I made a few large chains that loosely mimic handmade steel chains, but they are made out of soft terracotta. I was thinking how in crochet language a row of stitches is called, a chain. There is a really nice quote from Truman Capote, I see it being about art too, "One day I started writing, not knowing that I had chained myself for life to a noble but merciless master. When God hands you a gift, he also hands you a whip; and the whip is intended for self-flagellation solely."

I like this idea of chained in language - chained to my past. The clay chains are extremely fragile and not meant to function as chains - they are the opposite of what a chain can do: they can't hold weight. They are so fragile they can break in your hands, but they are made with care.

The piece *cadena perpetua II* means life sentence or endless chain and I feel that's what my practice is: an endless chain of events, of artworks.

It's nice to have so much clay at my disposal. It's a fun challenge to use it all. I like feeling the physical weight of the material in its raw state; when it's just clay. To know this body of work is 300 kilos of Grottaglie clay.

The works I've been making are very organic, coil-built shapes that mimic vessels; some are parts that can be stacked once fired. I didn't plan anything; I'm letting each piece plan itself.

Some textures are made by the motion of my thumb dragging the clay down. I like that it leaves my thumbprint. The other piece I made today uses pre-Colombian geometric patterns – patterns that are graphic symbols found on the facades of pyramids and in ancient textiles.

At the Castellana Caves I learned that stalactites grow less than 10 cm every thousand years. Stalagmites, which grow from the ground up, take even longer.

The opening is on the 18th of July, and I am sure I will be working until the last minute. Once I'm on the airplane I will begin crocheting my next project, which I don't know what will be, I like knowing that I will bring the copper back to Mexico.

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