

# PROJECT 30

## Marina Abramović

### 2015

*Marina Abramović: In Residence*

24 June – 5 July 2015

Pier 2/3, Walsh Bay, Sydney

## BIOGRAPHY

Born in Belgrade, in the former Yugoslavia, Marina Abramović has pioneered performance as a visual art form since the 1970s and has become one of the most celebrated and iconic artists of our time. The body has always been both subject and medium for Abramović, as she explores her physical and mental limits in works that ritualise the simple actions of everyday life. Abramović has withstood pain, exhaustion and danger in her quest for emotional and spiritual transformation.

Abramović has presented solo exhibitions at leading institutions around the world and her work has also been included in many large-scale international exhibitions including the Venice Biennale (1976 and 1997) and Documenta 6, 7 and 9, Kassel, Germany (1977, 1982 and 1992). In 2010, the Museum of Modern Art in New York held a major retrospective *The Artist is Present*, which attracted over 850,000 visitors. In 2014, *512 hours* at The Serpentine Galleries in London was a huge success and transformed the way people looked at art.

## FACTS

- Over the past decades, the artist has refined a series of actions to prepare herself for creative and durational work. She first shared these actions with other artists and performers through workshops and residencies, and in recent works has opened this process to the public.
- Abramović describes her audience as the 'living material' of the work and her prescribed actions direct attention away from the frameworks of modern life to our own inner worlds.
- In Project 30, visitors were quietly greeted by a team of facilitators, who were recruited and trained to work closely with Abramović and to lead audiences through the project.
- Guests were required to leave their phones, bags and watches inside the lockers provided, to undertake warm-up activities and put on noise-cancelling headphones before entering.
- Once inside, visitors were individually taken by the hand and led by one of the project facilitators to take part in the exercises, alone or with others.
- 12 Australian artists lived in residence upstairs from the exhibition and were mentored daily by Abramović and a program of special guests.

# PROJECT 30

## Marina Abramović

### 2015

#### PROJECT OVERVIEW

*I have made a career as a performance artist for 40 years now and my relationship to the public is changing. It used to be very simple: the public was sitting in the audience and I was performing in front of them. Then, with my performance The Artist is Present, I created a one-to-one experience where the public was watching and only one person was actually experiencing. In 512 Hours, which I did at the Serpentine Galleries in London, the public were actually the ones performing and I just blended in.*

*In Sydney, for Marina Abramović: In Residence, I will be like a conductor in the exhibition space, but it will be the public who will take the physical and emotional journey. We constantly like to be entertained, to get things from outside. We never take time to get in touch with ourselves... our inner self. My function in this new kind of performance situation is to show you, through the Abramović Method, what you can do for yourself. I wanted to make this big change because I understood that actually you can't get any experience by me doing it for you... So I'm completely shifting the paradigm, changing the rules."*

– Marina Abramović

Awarded the Golden Lion for Best Artist at the 1997 Venice Biennale, and listed as one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people of 2014, Abramović has presented solo exhibitions at leading institutions around the world. Kaldor Public Art Project 30, *Marina Abramović: In Residence*, represented the latest development in the artist's four-decade-long career, an innovative new experience at the forefront of international art.

Abramović and her team spent 12 days onsite at Pier 2/3, leading visitors through a series of transformative experiences that shifted their focus, challenged their perceptions, and changed the way they looked at art. The vast Walsh Bay Pier became a pop-up gallery venue, housing Abramović's extraordinary project, an artists' residency program, public talks and special events.

#### EXERCISES

**SLOW WALK** – In the slow walk, audiences did not walk for the sake of walking, but were required to turn their attention to the process of walking.

**COUNTING RIDE** – Audiences were given a pile of grains, and were required to separate rice from lentils, counting each individual, tiny piece.

**PLATFORM** – Audiences stepped up onto a large wooden platforms and shared that space with strangers.

**LOOKING AT COLOUR** – Audiences focused their gaze on a single square of colour.

**MUTUAL GAZE** – This exercise required audiences to look directly into the eyes of another person, possibly a complete stranger.

**BEDS** – Invited audiences to switch off, lie back and embrace the unfamiliar sensations of doing nothing.

Kaldor Public Art  
Project 30: *Marina  
Abramović, In  
Residence*, Pier 2/3,  
Walsh Bay, Sydney,  
2015

Photo: Pedro Greig



Kaldor Public Art  
Project 30: *Marina  
Abramović, In  
Residence*, Pier 2/3,  
Walsh Bay, Sydney,  
2015

Photo: Pedro Greig

