



# ARTAND

- NEWS -



## - ABRAMOVIĆ FEVER - By Elli Walsh, Hobart / Sydney

'Write about me as a warrior,' says Serbian-born, New York-based artist Marina Abramović on the occasion on her first Australian show in seventeen years at Mona. A pioneer of performance art, Abramović has recently shifted her focus from self to other in an attempt to combat a culture mounted on the ever-turning cogs of information that erode our concentration and embed our cognition. Perhaps more an archaeologist than a warrior, the artist helps us excavate the vestiges of our minds, experiences and memories.

Not quite a retrospective, 'Marina Abramović: Private Archaeology' presents important moments from the last four decades of the artist's career. Curators Nicole Durling and Olivier Varenne have crafted the presentation as an un-chronological series of revelatory vignettes into artist and self, flowing as a progressive fading-out of Abramović and a fading-in of the audience. This artwork-audience dialectic is spherical in a self-referential sense, for while the viewer engages with the work they simultaneously engage with themselves.

Staged across Mona's ground floor galleries, it is a show of extremes, both curatorially and experientially. As you pass from the first gallery – a small room with a triad of human sized-screens playing seminal performances with Ulay – into the second, you are confronted with a cacophony of screams. Screening simultaneously, and in close proximity, are *Free the Voice*, 1975; *AAA-AAA*, 1978; and *The Scream*, 2013. The latter is a carnal incarnation of an homage to Edvard Munch's painting *The Scream of Nature* (1893-1910), giving voice (via 270 Norwegians) to the most famous silent scream in history. For Abramović, these works are about liberation and pure expression, the voice acting as synecdochic proxy for the person, the soul. And yet I couldn't help but feel dissonantly assaulted, withdrawn – the opposite of 'free'. Herein lies the gulf between meaning and affect that defines much of the show.

After exploring drawers containing thematised excerpts of books, artefacts, photographs and portraits in the eponymous work *Private Archaeology*, 1997-2015, one arrives at *The Video Portrait Gallery*, a circular installation of thirteen single-channel portraits of the artist stretching from 1997 until 2003. Every new video that features Abramović's face will be added to it in the future and, in this way, the work is a physiognomic perpetuation of the artist as icon. In Gallery Six is *The Chamber of Silence*, 2015, a site-specific installation derived from the Abramović Method in which the participator dons noise-cancelling headphones and reclines in a chair facing a window. The piece is a gestural remedy to the unending patterns of information and consumption that plague our lives. Yet it also functions as a cathartic intermission between the

## - RELATED ARTICLES -



Lurid Beauty



Frank Stella: A Retrospective



Collection+: Christian Thompson



The Inspector of Tides



Lee Bul



4 Solos



Sculpture by the Sea

'artist-focused' works of the first half of the show and the 'audience-focused' second half – a kind of recalibration of equilibrium (and thoughtful antidote to the adjacent 'scream' room, which leaches through the headphones).

In a world where spirituality and sacredness are often relegated to the realm of art, *Transitory Objects* – in Gallery Eight – offers meditative spaces for a figurative exchange of energy between subject and object. Close your eyes, lie beneath amethyst geodes, press your body against crystals and be still. This ethos is continued in *Power Objects*, 2015, a site-specific installation of nine antiquities selected by the artist from David Walsh's collection. Here, the viewer is encouraged to partake in a silent communion with each artefact, spawning a synergy of energy that ostensibly activates our own 'private archaeology'.

Concurrently, 'Marina Abramović: In Residence' is being hosted in Sydney's Walsh Bay and, as expected, audience experience is the affective kernel of the project. If the symbiotic transaction between audience and artwork was present in 'Private Archaeology', it is abundant in 'In Residence' – an experience that genuinely challenges the passivity of the public. Twelve Australian artists are living upstairs for the duration of the twelve-day project, working with Abramović to inform their own performance practice.

Channelling the artist's dictum that 'good art is made in life', the project sees Abramović present for its twelve-day duration. After surrendering all belongings – including, importantly, your watch – each visitor is guided in silence by spectral facilitators clad in black through six exercises in the Abramović Method. Maybe it's the pillowy silence – or the surreal slow-motion march up and down the room – that makes one feel as though they've been sucked into a vortex; some kind of liminal land in which time has evaporated and boundaries have dissolved. Count grains of rice, stare at colour swatches, stand on a cruciform stage with your eyes closed, stare into the eyes of a stranger and lie on a stretcher bed – all of these experiences have been designed by the artist to 'get in touch with ourselves'.

In both settings, Abramović precipitates the power of concentration, repetition and will power, forging beautiful microcosms of the ways in which we can – in the artist's own words – 'get back to basics'.

**Marina Abramović: Private Archaeology**, Mona, Hobart, 13 June – 5 October 2015 /  
**Marina Abramović: In Residence**, Walsh Bay, Sydney, 24 June - 5 July 2015

#### Image Credits

1. Marina Abramović, 2014; photograph © Marco Anelli/Serpentine Galleries
2. Marina Abramović, *Counting the Rice*, 2015; exercise for public participation from a series of workshops entitled 'Cleaning the House' (1979-); table, chairs, pencils, paper, white rice, black lentils, instructions for the public, duration limitless; courtesy the Marina Abramović Institute, image courtesy Mona; Photograph MONA/Rémi Chauvin
3. Marina Abramović, *Waterfall*, 2003; three-channel video installation, colour, sound, duration 00:30:00 looped; deck chairs; courtesy the Marina Abramović Archives and LIMA, image courtesy Mona; photograph MONA/Rémi Chauvin
4. Marina Abramović, *Inner sky*, 1991 / *Inner sky*, 2015; courtesy the Marina Abramović Archives and Sean Kelly Gallery, New York, image courtesy Mona; photograph MONA/Rémi Chauvin
5. Marina Abramović, *Black Dragon*, 1994; blue quartz, green quartz, hematite, obsidian, rose quartz, smoked quartz, snowflake obsidian, chrysocolla (21 pieces); courtesy the Marina Abramović Archives and Sean Kelly Gallery, New York, image courtesy Mona; photograph MONA/Rémi Chauvin
6. Marina Abramović, *Video Portrait Gallery*, 1997-; 13-channel video installation, courtesy the Marina Abramović Archives, LIMA and Mona; photograph MONA/Rémi Chauvin
7. Marina Abramović, *Power Objects*, installation view, Mona Library Gallery, 2015; courtesy Mona; photograph MONA/Rémi Chauvin
8. Marina Abramović at Mona; image courtesy Mona; photograph MONA/Rémi Chauvin
- 9-11. Images from 'Marina Abramović: 512 Hours', Serpentine Gallery, London, 2014; photograph © Marco Anelli



Robert MacPherson: The Painter's Reach

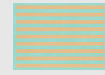
**NEW!**  
ARTAND



**Hiding in Plain Sight**



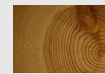
**Khadim Ali:  
Transition/Evacuation**



**Birth of the Cool**



**William Kentridge: Notes  
Towards a Model Opera**



**Nicholas Mangan: Ancient  
Lights**



**Nick Cave: Here Hear**



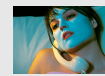
**In Pursuit of Venus [infected]**



**Jean-Michel Basquiat: Now's  
the Time**



**TURN, TURN, TURN**



**Highlights from the MGA  
Collection**



**24 Frames Per Second**



**Sanctuary: Tombs of the  
outcasts**



**Charles Pollock: A Retrospective**



**Michael Heizer: Alters**



**John Wolseley: Heartlands and  
Headwaters**



**Thomas Houseago: Masks  
(Pentagon)**



**Gajin Fujita: Warriors, Ghosts  
and Ancient Gods of the Pacific**



**The Australian Pavilion at  
Venice**

**Laurie Simmons: How We See**



**Juan Muñoz: Double Bind & Around**



**Michael Parekowhai: The Promised Land**



**Indigenous Australia: Enduring civilization**



**The Piano Has Been Drinking (Not Me)**



**Then, Now, Tomorrow – After the War**



**Imaginary Accord**



**After Midnight: Indian Modernism to Contemporary India 1947/1997**



**Tony Albert: Thou didst let fall**



**Kate Beynon: An-Li: A Chinese Ghost Tale**



**Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in Detroit**



**Body Talk**



**Luminous World: Contemporary art from the Westfarmers Collection**



**Earth and Sky**



**ACO Virtual**



**Art & Australia Collection 2003–2013**



**MoMA Presents Björk**



**Saltwater Country**



**2015 Triennial: Surround Audience**

**David Lynch: Between Two Worlds**



**Billy Apple®: The Artist Has to Live Like Everybody Else**



**Biennale of Moving Images**



**Søren Solkær: Surface**



**Rodney Pople: Golden Age**



**Treasures of the Jewish Ghetto of Venice**



**Niki de Saint Phalle**



**Shaun Gladwell**



**Peter Hennessey: Making it Real**



**Thornton Dial: His Southern Stories: Drawings 1990 - 2011**



**Takis: Magnetic Fields**



**Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic**



**Mitch Cairns: Finches**



**Farnsworth's Republic for Dogs**



**Mystic Renegade: The Promise of Return**



**Magnificent Obsessions: The Artist as Collector**



**Day for Night**



**China Up Close**



**Islamic Art Now: Contemporary Art of the Middle East**

**Ragnar Kjartansson**



**Justene Williams: The Curtain Breathed Deeply**



**Sullivan+Strumpf 10-Year Anniversary**



**David Adjaye: Form, Heft, Material**



**Gosia Wlodarczak: Found in Translation**



**Patricia Piccinini: Like Us**



**Nyapanyapa Yunupingu: Lawarra Maypa**



**Actions for Tomorrow**



**Drawing Out**



**Art Stage Singapore**



**Kitty Chou: Exploration of Abstract Realism**



**Andrei Davidoff: Solitary Shade**



**Kochi-Muziris Biennale**



**Warriors and Mothers: Epic Mbembe Art**



**Bill Culbert**



**Inside There Falls**



**Zhang Huan: Sydney Buddha**



**Hito Steyerl: Too Much World**



**David Shrigley: Life and Life Drawing**



**Mambo: 30 years of shelf-indulgence**



**Andy Warhol's Jewish Geniuses**



**James Turrell: A Retrospective**



**The Divine Comedy**



**Future Beauty**



**Book review: Avant-garde Videogames: Playing with technoculture**



**Richard Avedon People**



**Selected Exhibition: Notes to GB**



**Takahiro Iwasaki: Itsukushima Reflection Model**



**Andrew Rogers**



**In the Flesh**



**Yang Fudong: Filmscapes**



**Alex Seton: Last Resort**



**Reko Rennie: Warriors Come Out To Play**



**Emily Floyd: The Dawn**



**Chris Ofili: Night and Day**



**Collection+: Pinaree Sanpitak**



**Cold Intimacy**



**Fashion Icons**



**Light Show**



**Pop to popism**



**Really Useful Knowledge**



**Tracey Moffatt: Spirited**



**Book review:  
Performance\_Ritual\_Document**



**Romance Was Born for Kids**



**Robert Gober: The Heart Is Not  
a Metaphor**



**The Fashion World of Jean Paul  
Gaultier**



**SECOND/SECOND: Finnbogi  
Pétursson at Wood Street  
Galleries**



**Crossing Paths with Vivian  
Maier**



**Stars and Stripes**



**@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz**



**Five Decades at Watters Gallery**



**Anselm Kiefer at the Royal  
Academy**



**FormLAB 5: Mongolia**



**Frank Gehry at the Centre  
Pompidou**



**Book review: Disobedient  
Objects**



**Cultivate: New Artisans**



**Robert Jacks: Order & Variation**

**Performance Space presents BURUWAN**





**Art as a Verb**



**Masters of Indonesian Portraiture**



**Martu Art from the Far Western Desert**



**The Art of Lucy Culliton**



**Book review: A Little History: Nick Cave & Cohorts, 1981–2013**



**Sara Hughes: Sing a Rainbow**



**Primavera 2014**



**My Generation: Young Chinese Artists**



**Lindy Lee: The Dark of Absolute Freedom**



**Joshua Yeldham: Surrender**



**SELFIES**



**Judith Wright: Desire**



**Book review: Big Art Small Art**



**Five Centuries of Melancholia**



**The Secret of the Phaistos Disc**



**We Don't Need a Map**



**Selected exhibition: Siteworks at Bundanon**



**Selected exhibition: Arthur Boyd**



**Selected exhibition: Dovecot and the Australian Tapestry Workshop**



Selected exhibition:  
**LANDSEASKY**



Selected exhibition: John  
Perceval's angels



Review: David Rosetzky: Gaps



Book review: Art & Ecology Now



Selected exhibition: ARTAND  
Australia Collection Show



Selected exhibition: Olafur  
Eliasson: Riverbed



Selected exhibition: Seung Yul  
Oh



Selected exhibition: Treasures  
of Lima



Selected exhibition: Lucio  
Fontana



Selected exhibition: Dani Marti



Selected exhibition: Mooie  
Indie: Indonesian Art Now



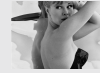
Selected exhibition: Gunter  
Christmann



Selected exhibition: Danie  
Mellor at the Edinburgh  
International Festival



Selected exhibition: Stuart  
Ringholt



Selected exhibition: Undressed



Selected exhibition: Daniel  
Buren



Selected exhibition: Liverpool  
Biennial 2014



Selected exhibition: Making a  
Classic Modern

Selected exhibition: Cornelia Tipuamantumirri



Selected exhibition: Tim Woodward



Selected exhibition: Big Bambú



Selected exhibition: Duro Olowu



Selected exhibition: Australian Aboriginal Art Meets de Chirico



Selected exhibition: Dong Gang International Photography Festival



Review: Roy Ananda



Review: Justene Williams



Teelah George



Selected exhibition: George Gittoes



Selected exhibition: Harvest



Selected Exhibition: Marina Abramović's 512 Hours



Selected exhibition: Terracotta Daughters



Selected exhibition: Arthur Boyd: An Active Witness



Selected exhibition: Gary Heery: Group Show



Selected exhibition: Hot Modernism: Building Modern Queensland 1945-75



Selected exhibition: Family Matters



Selected exhibition: Darren Sylvester: Dreams End with You



Selected exhibition: Hereby Make Protest

Column: Damiano Bertoli's 'Associates'



**Selected exhibition: British Folk Art**



**Selected exhibition: True Self: David Rosetzky**



**Selected exhibition: Michael Zavros: Bad Dad**



**Review: Gary Carsley: Sciencefictive**



**Selected exhibition: Douglas Gordon: The Only Way Out Is the Only Way In**



**Selected exhibition: Mid-Century Modern**



**Selected exhibition: Plumes & Pearls**



**Selected exhibition: Paola Pivi**



**Selected exhibition: Home**



**Selected exhibition: Cartoons for Joseph Selleny**



**Selected exhibition: Italian Masterpieces from Spain's Royal Court**



**Review: Notes from Art Basel Hong Kong**



**Column: Das Boot**



**Selected exhibition: Lygia Clark**



**Selected exhibition: Novocastria**



**Selected exhibition: Exotic Lies Sacred Ties**



**Selected exhibition: No Country**



**Review: Notes from Frieze**

**Selected exhibition: Listen to Mental (Radio)**



**Selected exhibition: Mirka Mora**



**Review: Concrete**



**Selected exhibition: Tacita Dean: Event for a Stage**



**Selected exhibition: Inge King: Constellation**



**Review: It's Timely**



**Selected exhibition: Ai Weiwei: According to What?**



**Selected exhibition: Len Lye**



**Book review: Thomas Girst, The Duchamp Dictionary**



**Selected exhibition: Brook Andrew: De Anima**



**Selected exhibition: Shaun Gladwell: Afghanistan / Field Recordings**



**Selected exhibition: The Glamour of Italian Fashion 1945–2014**



**Selected exhibition: Carol Jerrens**



**Selected exhibition: German Angst**



**Selected exhibition: Urs Fischer: Last Supper**



**Review: Stephen Bush: Steenhuffel**



**Selected exhibition: TV Moore: Rum Jungle**



**Selected exhibition: Ken & Julia Yonetani: The Last Supper**



**Selected exhibition: Guy Grey-Smith: Art as Life**



**Book review: Jens Hoffmann, Show Time: The 50 Most Influential Exhibitions of Contemporary Art**



**Selected exhibition: Fugitive Structures**



**Selected exhibition: Beauty and Strength: Michael Riley**



**Review: Richard Mosse: The Enclave**



**Selected exhibition: NEW14**



**Selected exhibition: Other Primary Structures**



**Selected exhibition: Transcendence: Nell, Angelica Mesiti, Aura Satz**



**Selected exhibition: The Haunted Lotus**



**Selected exhibition: Genius & Ambition**



**Selected exhibition: Anne Ferran: Shadow Land**



**Selected exhibition: Tino Sehgal: This is so contemporary**



**Book review: Sasha Grishin, Australian Art: A History**



**Selected exhibition: Fiona Tan: Inventory**



**Selected exhibition: Do Ho Suh: Home Within Home Within Home Within Home Within Home**



**Selected exhibition: Hubert Duprat / Roger Ballen**



**Book review: Full of Love Full of Wonder: Nike Savvas**



**Book review: Mitchell Oakley Smith and Alison Kubler, Art/Fashion in the 21st Century**



**Selected exhibition: Melbourne Now**



**Selected exhibition: Illuminate**

**Selected exhibition: Singapore Biennale 2013: If the World Changed**



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**Selected exhibition: Daniel Crooks at the Adelaide Film Festival**



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**Selected exhibition: Sopheap Pich: Collection+**



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**Review: 13th Istanbul Biennial: Mom, Am I Barbarian?**



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**Review: 12th Biennale de Lyon: Meanwhile ... Suddenly and Then**



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**Ryoji Ikeda**



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**NO/Escape: Bernardi Roig at the Phillips Collection**



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**Candice Breitz**

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