

BUNDESKUNSTHALLE



MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ

The Cleaner

20 April to 12 August 2018

Media Conference: 19 April 2018, 12 p.m.

Content

1.	Exhibition Dates	Page 2
2.	Information on the Exhibition	Page 4
3.	Aspects in the Exhibition	Page 6
4.	Re-performances and Participatory Works	Page 12
5.	Biography Marina Abramović	Page 15
6.	Publication	Page 19
7.	Current and Upcoming Exhibitions	Page 20

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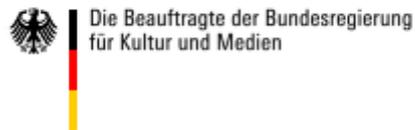
Exhibition Dates

Exhibition	20 April to 12 August 2018
Director	Rein Wolfs
Managing Director	Patrick Schmeing
Curator	Susanne Kleine
Program Curator	Miriam Barhoum
Head of Corporate Communications / Press Officer	Sven Bergmann
Catalogue / Press Copy	€ 32 / € 16
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Admission standard / reduced / family ticket	€ 10 / € 6.50 / € 16
Happy Hour-Ticket	€ 7 Tuesday and Wednesday: 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday to Sunday: 5 to 7 p.m. (for individuals only)
Guided Group Tours information and registration	T +49 228 9171-243 F +49 228 9171-244 kunstvermittlung@bundeskunsthalle.de
Public Transport	Underground lines 16, 63, 66 and bus lines 610, 611 and 630 to Heussallee / Museumsmeile Deutsche Bahn / UN-Campus: Lines RB 26 (MittelrheinBahn), RB 30 (Rhein-Ahr- Bahn) and RB 48 (Rhein-Wupper-Bahn)
Parking	There is a car and coach park on Emil- Nolde-Straße behind the Bundeskunsthalle. Navigation: Emil-Nolde-Straße 11, 53113 Bonn

Press Information (German / English) www.bundeskunsthalle.de
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Information on the Exhibition

Marina Abramović, born in Belgrade in 1946, is one of the most controversial and most-discussed artists, especially in respect of her performances, in which, time and again, she explores and transgresses her own physical and mental boundaries.

Rein Wolfs, director of the Bundeskunsthalle, says: “Marina Abramović is such an immensely important artist that a major retrospective in Europe was long overdue. Thanks to the presentation of a number of reperformances throughout the run of the show, *The Cleaner* is more than just a simple exhibition, it is an immersive, all-embracing experience of great art historical significance.”

The large European retrospective of Abramović’s work presents 50 years of work and is offering a comprehensive insight into all the facets of her oeuvre – from her early work, when she worked alone, via her twelve-year relationship and artistic collaboration with the German artist, Ulay (Frank Uwe Laysiepen, *1943) until today. Films, photographs, paintings, drawings, sculpture, installations and selected archival material are testament to the range of the themes addressed, and media employed, by the artist. Above all, however, Abramović’s *Re-Performances* afford the greatest authentic experience of her work, offering direct, emotional and unfiltered access to Abramović’s artistic project.

The artist’s work with immaterial art forms – sound and performance – dovetails with the general development of the experimental art scenes in the 1960s and 1970s and her work is coloured by the many different cultures, spiritual traditions and political tensions in which she has moved – starting in then-communist Yugoslavia, where she grew up in the area of tension between her parents’ ardent political engagement and her grandmother’s equally fervent religion.

Abramović’s work is centred on personal experience and responsibility, which she investigates in-depth via memory, pain, loss, endurance and trust. Further aspects of her work – (the experience of) time, and the way in which she deals with her own body – are equally impressive. For more than 50 years, she has been reacting in her work to the world around her, employing her own body and personal energy as artistic means of expression. She has carved out a place for herself in the annals of art history, with her highly physically and mentally challenging performances, which span a broad spectrum from violent and risky actions to silent encounters with the public.

The Abramović Method, which consists of concentration and a mobilisation of her own strength and energy, in order to achieve the greatest possible tolerance and openness in dialogue with her audience, is practiced in workshops worldwide. The artist addresses fundamental issues of existence in her work, and seeks to provoke and move the viewer in a direct manner. In line with her conviction that



'A powerful performance will transform everyone in the room', she questions hierarchies and focuses her work on individual and collective experiences.

Ever recurring themes in Abramović's works include purification and cleansing – physically and symbolically – by means of fire, screaming, soap and water, minerals, time and silence; catharsis and transformation are key concepts in her oeuvre. In their portrayal of states, feelings, relationships, tensions, power relations and energies, the artist's works open themselves to existential and (gender-)political interpretations.

An exhibition of Bundeskunsthalle in cooperation with Moderna Museet, Stockholm, and Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk

Curators

Moderna Museet: Lena Essling

Louisiana Museum of Modern Art: Tine Colstrup

Bundeskunsthalle: Susanne Kleine

The exhibition will travel to Palazzo Strozzi, Florence.



Aspects in the Exhibition

Presence and Time

In connection with her major retrospective, in 2010, the artist was physically present at the Museum of Modern Art in New York for three months. For 736 hours in all, she sat for The Artist is Present on a chair across from an empty chair. Never leaving her seat or changing position, she sat there every day for the duration of the museum's opening hours, exchanging gazes with those who accepted the invitation to sit in the chair opposite her.

This silent, mutual gaze and exchange of energy between the artist and hundreds of strangers extends the concept of the Nightsea Crossing series that she had performed with Ulay in 1982–1986. (This work can be seen later in the exhibition.)

Would the chair opposite her remain unoccupied? Who in New York would have the time to turn off their phones and sit still? A lot, as it turned out. In this physically and mentally demanding long durational performance, the audience was given a central position. While the artist 'just' sat there, many had a strong emotional reaction to the silent encounter.

Early Concepts

Abramović started painting as a teenager. In 1965, at the age of 19, Abramović commenced her studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade. As was the custom there, she painted still lifes, portraits and landscapes, but also traffic accidents and collisions of lorries. Her images capture the moment, in which two lorries crash into one another head-on, and exchange the energy and power let loose by the collision. This exchange of energy between two poles – and later between two people – would become one of the central themes addressed by the artist. Following the painting, Three Secrets of 1965, which represented a breakthrough for Abramović, because it consciously integrated the involvement or fantasy of the viewer, she started to paint cloud motifs. They embodied a further important theme for the artist, that is, her interest in spirituality, above all, in immateriality. Her cloud studies led to her first attempts at performative projects, for instance, to the idea of drawing on the sky with condensation trails left by aeroplanes, which she would never realise. Several concept sketches are shown in this room alongside other early works and concepts.

First Performances. Body. Rhythm

Abramović began to see, and use, her own body as material. She, the subject, her own experiences, and, above all, her personal responsibility would become key to her oeuvre. With her increasingly immaterial artistic statements – sound and performance – she now inserted herself into the development of the experimental art scene of the 1960s and '70s as a whole. One thinks of Joseph Beuys, for instance, but also of Valie Export, Gina Pane, Vito Acconci and Charlotte Moorman.

She appeared in public in 1973 with her first true performance, Rhythm 10, which unified sound and body. In the first part of the performance, she recorded the sound of her stabbing with a knife between her outstretched fingers as rapidly as possible, picking up a different knife each time she stabbed her hand by mistake. In the second part, she played the recorded sound back and listening to the tape, intentionally repeated the sequence and mistakes of the first part of the performance. Here Abramović was exploring new means and material of expression—her physical and mental ability to withstand pain, exhaustion, and danger, in a direct exchange with her audience. She repeatedly placed herself quite consciously in real danger, which led her to realise that tiring and exploiting herself to the point of exhaustion



would be part of her existence as an artist. This led to her losing consciousness due to lack of oxygen in her performance, *Rhythm 5*, set within a burning star, then a ubiquitous political symbol in Yugoslavia. It was at this time that her artistic stance would change for the long term thanks to a personal realisation: during her legendary performance, *Rhythm 0* of 1974, she understood, whilst taking her exploration of her boundaries further, that the audience, too, would be involved as agents in her work, and even that this was necessary. They permitted the work to be made, and the artist became their material: Abramović made available 72 objects to her audience, and invited them to use them to do what they wanted with her. The options provoked extreme behaviour – both in respect of the dynamic between the behaviour of individuals and the group, as well as in respect of the group towards her as an individual, as a woman and as an artist. In 1975, she performed *Lips of Thomas*, in which the audience eventually intervened and prevented her from inflicting any further pain on herself – something that she had herself not conceived of.

The German artist Joseph Beuys, a central figure of the European performance scene at the time, attended the first two *Rhythm* performances. It was during these years that Abramović had her first real contact with the art scene outside her Eastern European home region.

Pain. Beauty. Freeing

Some works consist of a simple act and scenography, others are made up of multiple elements and symbolic layers. The symbolism in *Lips of Thomas* is multilayered and complex.

Honey, red wine, a female nude, a cross, a five-pointed star – Christian, occult and communist symbols become physical marks on the artist's body. In the ritualistic, masochistic séance, the artist appears as both shaman, victim and martyr.

The female nude is among the most classical motifs in the history of art, which automatically enters into a dialogue with her when she brushes her hair in the nude *Art Must Be Beautiful*, *Artist Must Be Beautiful*. While the French artist Edgar Degas' (1834–1917) semi-clad ballerinas gracefully brush their hair in the dressing room, Abramović's act is more flagellant than elegant, as she aggressively brushes out the decorative standards of beauty for art and (women) artists.

In the three *Freeing* performances, exhaustion is the method employed. The artist screams until she loses her voice. We do not know why, but she screams it out until nothing is left, like a cathartic reset. *Freeing*, liberation, deliverance and cleansing of the body and mind form a central theme of the artist's production. The *Freeing* works were made before Abramović definitively freed herself from Belgrade and moved to Amsterdam in 1976.

Relations. Abramović & Ulay

In 1975, Marina Abramović met Ulay (Frank Uwe Laysiepen, b. 1943), who was born, as she was, on 30 November. She moved to Amsterdam to be with him, and the city became the home base for their joint concepts; in the following intense 12 years from 1976 until 1988, they lived and worked together. Their symbiotic relationship, "*UlayandMarina*", was referred to as a bonding agent by Abramović – which she meant in the exclusively positive sense of them sharing energy. In 1977, they bought an old Citroën van, in which they lived for the next three years, driving from place to place like nomads. They described their attitudes as follows:



ART VITAL

No fixed living place
Permanent movement
Direct contact
Local relation
Self-selection
Passing limitations
Taking risks
Mobil energy

No rehearsal
No predicted end
No repetition

Extended vulnerability
Exposure to chance
Primary reactions

Their legendary performances, in which they extended the performative concept to include notions of duality, symbiosis and polarity, retain their relevance today, and still influence artists. The relationship between man and woman (without making their own relationship the subject of their work) was soon a central theme for the pair. Their works explored the potential of positive and negative energy, complete dependence and absolute trust between two people, which resulted in the Relation Works they created together. In performances of this period, they slapped each other's faces, screamed at each other, breathed into each other's mouths, collided with one another or ran into columns—generally within formally simple settings, designed for one action alone. The couple also shared a similar appearance, having similar hairstyles, with the aim of unifying male and female energies or calling differences into question. In *Imponderabilia*, performed at an exhibition in Bologna in 1977, the public were only able to enter the museum between Ulay and Abramović, who stood naked left and right of the entrance. Issues such as vulnerability, shame, morality, and so on were transparently addressed in the show alongside ideas of gender—and the visitor again became an active performer.

The Lovers. The Break

The search for identity/ies, for self-determination, boundary-transgressing experiences, experiences of time and timelessness became ever more intense in their private love relationship and in their public artistic partnership, and this led to a rupture – they sold their van and left Europe, in order to learn about non-Western philosophies and ways of life. They studied various meditation techniques, telepathy and hypnosis. Indigenous Australians, Tibetan monks and Sufis became their teachers. They coached themselves in mental endurance and to sit still for hours on end, which would later lead to the series of *Nightsea Crossing* performances that they originally named *Gold Found by the Artists*, and performed 22 times between 1981 and 1987 in many different places worldwide, premiering it in 1981 with 16 performances one day after the next in Sydney. The original title was meant metaphorically, but also literally, because they had, in fact, discovered gold in the Australian



Outback; they also considered their experiences with the indigenous Australians to be 'worth their weight in gold'. The inertia and silence, monotony, and endurance of pain that they experienced, and the attainment of a higher knowledge ('fleeting knowledge') would be echoed in their performance: they both sat silently at a table and looked at one another in the eye. Various objects lay on the table – including the gold, boomerangs and a living snake. This performance brought about a rupture in their work together. Ulay kept interrupting her, and Marina did not follow him, and the performance as originally planned came to an end. On her return to Amsterdam, the couple decided – despite resistance from the Chinese authorities – to go ahead with the performance, *The Lovers*, that they had been planning for a long time. Over a period of 90 days, they ran towards one another from opposite ends of the Great Wall of China (from the head of the dragon of Eastern mythology or from his tail in the west and met in the middle). In 1988, at the end of an inner and outer journey, they separated, and their private and artistic partnership – symbiotic for many years – came to an end; the complete trust and merging became distance; collaboration was finally no longer possible. The work, *The Moon/The Sun*, consisting of two lacquered vases, of 1987 – one highly polished, the other matte – was typical of the now evident polarity.

Balkans

After the bloody break-up of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the Yugoslav Wars, also known as the Balkan Conflict, the artist turned her attention more than ever to the land of her birth, and her Serbian-Montenegrin origins. Several of her works of an intense nature addressed existential, historical and political aspects of the wars. In her video work, *Cleaning the Mirror I*, she devotedly washed a human skeleton – this old Slavic ritual is the work of mourning and simultaneously a memento mori. In *Balkan Baroque*, she gave voice to the horrors and pain of the war – but also to reconciliation, guilt, shame, stench, death, suffering and madness in its broadest sense. Six hours a day, for four days, Abramović sat on a mountain of fresh cattle bones at the Venice Biennale in 1997, and attempted to scrub them clean with a brush and soap suds. To accompany this, she sang fragments of traditional Balkan songs. Part of this work is a video, installed as a triptych: to the centre, is a recording of the artist talking about what she calls a wolf rat that kills fellow members of its species; to either side, mute portraits of her parents, who fought against the National Socialists under General Tito during the Second World War, are projected. Abramović staged *Balkan Baroque* like a Baroque vision of hell in the middle of an art paradise, and she was awarded the 'Golden Lion' for it. In *Balkan Erotic Epic*, which was based on Abramović's studies of old fertility rites, the artist investigates the erotic energies of human and nature.

More and more of less and less

Abramović dedicated herself increasingly to what she called her transitory objects; crystals, minerals, such as rose quartz, amethyst and obsidian, which permitted an exchange of energy between stones and public. These objects became 'instruments', inviting the viewer to stand, sit down or lie down, to stay a while, to pause for a moment, and to feel. The link between the human body and the earth-bound minerals had fascinated her in tales from Old China. And her research into transitions from one state into another more expanded one, into energy exchange between object and subject, and the power of minerals and resources of the earth led her to Brazil in 1991, where she visited amongst other places a mine in the Sierra Pelada. Gold is another natural material that has been loaded with a great number of symbolic and mystical meanings across cultures and spiritual traditions and so it becomes a main issue in a



video portrait: Abramović wears a thin gold-leaf mask fluttering in the breeze – perhaps along with an homage to Joseph Beuys (1921–1986), who wore a similar gold mask in *How to Explain Pictures to a Dead Hare* (1965), which Abramović reperformed in 2005 for *Seven Easy Pieces*.

Several of Abramović's performances are performed only before a camera, not a live audience. In one of these videos, *Sleeping Under the Banyan Tree*, we watch her sleep under a banyan tree, which is associated with spirituality and immortality in Buddhist culture. And with *The Kitchen V: Holding the Milk* she creates an homage to Saint Teresa of Ávila, who in her writings tells of an experience of mystic levitation in her kitchen.

Whereas her early works were rather loud and painfully transgressive, she would now seek out other ways of transcending boundaries – silence, nature, myth, simplicity, energy, time and transformation would increasingly feature in her (media) vocabulary.

The exercises she would practice – as well for her teaching activities – such as meditation, fasting, being silent, self-control, willpower, endurance, and slowness would flow into the workshop she was already holding internationally for students and performers, *Cleaning the House*, the basis of which was a collective deceleration and 'slow movements' with the aim of creating a positive personal aura and energy exchange.

Long durational performances

In recent years, Abramović has carried out a number of long durational performances, where she is present for an extended period of time in a situation structured around simple acts made within an exhibition space.

In *The House with the Ocean View*, the artist stayed for 12 days and nights in three linked, suspended rooms. During her daily routine, which included neither eating nor speaking, visitors could watch her sleeping, showering or going to the lavatory. During the performance, she wore items of clothing inspired by the Russian Constructivist, Alexander Rodtchenko (1891–1956). Three ladders, the rungs of which consisted of carving knives with their blades pointing upwards, separated the artist from the visitors. The central focus of the work was the constant perception and cognisance of repetition and being, a ritualisation of everyday activities, such as sleeping and showering, and the exchange of gazes and energies between artist and audience.

And Marina Abramović continued to track the reversal of the traditional distribution of roles between artist, audience and institution. For instance, in her exhibition, *512 Hours at the Serpentine Gallery* in London, there were no artworks to be seen – the artist entered into direct contact with the audience, without any kind of mediation, directions or script. Visitors had to hand in their personal belongings, and were asked to walk in silently. Once inside the gallery, they entered an empty room where they carried out simple tasks: staring at a white wall, lying on a bed, walking in slow motion, counting lentils and grains of rice, or standing on a podium. Each of these activities assisted the visitors to feel their own presence in the space. Sooner or later, they developed sufficient sensitivity to perceive the collective energy. The work turned on their heads existing expectations about what visitors might normally experience in an art gallery – as experiment, as 'social sculpture', based on participation, a new concept of time emerged.

Reperformance

Especially since 2005, Abramović has worked with reperformance, existing pieces performed anew, both her own and other artists' works. In *Seven Easy Pieces*, Abramović reperforms



five works from the 1960s and 70s by other artists – Valie Export, Vito Acconci, Bruce Nauman, Gina Pane and Joseph Beuys – along with one of her own early pieces and a new performance created for the occasion. The project lasted seven days, with a new seven-hour performance each day. The title's 'easy' is, naturally, ironic.

Abramović considers reperformance a method for keeping performance art alive. The pieces are repeated by a living body in time and space, instead of existing only as historical documentation. She embraces the fact that the works, her own and others', change when new performers realize them in new contexts, in the same way that a piece of music changes each time new musicians interpret classical scores.



Re-performances and Participatory Works

Live re-performances of legendary performances as well as two performances that invite visitor participation will punctuate the entire run of the exhibition. Legendary performances will be live on show in the exhibition as well as two participatory performances that invite visitors to experience the Abramovic-Method firsthand.

Imponderabilia, 1977

“Imponderable.

Such imponderable human factors as one’s aesthetic sensitivity. The overriding importance of imponderables in determining human conduct.”

Marina Abramović/Ulay, in: *The Cleaner*, 2017

At the Galleria Comunale d’Arte Moderna in Bologna, Marina Abramović and her then partner Ulay spent ninety minutes standing facing each other motionless and naked in a narrow entrance passage, forcing visitors wishing to enter the museum to squeeze between them.

In the re-performance – as in the original – two performers will stand naked in a narrow passage so that visitors can only get past them sideways.

Tuesday and Wednesday, 12 p.m./noon – 8 p.m.

Thursday to Sunday, 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Art Must Be Beautiful, Artist Must Be Beautiful, 1975

In the original version, first performed at the Charlottenborg Art Festival in Copenhagen, the artist sat on a chair for roughly one hour with a brush in one hand and a comb in the other, aggressively brushing and combing her hair while constantly repeating the phrase “Art must be beautiful, artist must be beautiful.”

Every Sunday, 12 p.m./noon – 3.30 p.m.

Luminosity, 1997

This glaringly lit video work shows the artist perched on a bicycle seat, naked and trying to keep her balance for sixty minutes with her feet off the ground. A re-performance of the work can be seen in the exhibition.

Opening weekend (19–22 April 2018)

Similar Illusion, 1981

At the Melbourne Sculpture Triennial, Marina Abramović and Ulay held a tango pose for ninety-six minutes in the midst of a rectangular arrangement of tables for the audience. Abramović wore a red dress, Ulay a black suit. The performance was accompanied by extremely loud Argentinean tango music. The work will be re-performed in the exhibition on the opening weekend.

Opening weekend (19–22 April 2018)



Work Relation, 1978

**“We are doing heavy physical work;
Transporting stones back and forth in metal buckets.
There is no result.”**

Marina Abramović/Ulay, in: *Relation Work and Detour*, 1980

Marina Abramović and Ulay first performed this work during the Arnhem Festival at the Theater aan Rijn. They carried buckets filled with heavy stones from one end of the room to the other. The initial performance lasted two hours. It was gradually extended and eventually went on for eight hours. The re-performance will be shown during the run of the exhibition, and visitors are invited to participate.

House with the Ocean View, 2012

“This performance came from my desire to see if it is possible to use daily discipline, rules and restriction to purify myself.”

Marina Abramović, in: *The Biography of Biographies*, 2004

At the Sean Kelly Gallery in New York, the artist inhabited three interconnected, wall-mounted living units for twelve days and nights. During her ritualized daily routine, which included neither speaking nor eating, visitors could watch her sleep, take a shower or use the toilet. Three ladders, their rungs made of carving knives with the sharp side of the blade facing up, separated the artist from the audience.

The work will be presented as a re-performance at the Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn from **12–24 June 2018**.

The Method

The two works/exercises come from the workshop series *Cleaning the House* (1979 ff.), which is primarily intended to instruct performers in the Marina Abramović method. Here, for once, the visitor can share that experience. The two works/exercises are an integral part of the exhibition and can be used by visitors every day during the opening hours.

Mutual Gaze, 2017/2018

An exercise with audience participation from the workshop series *Cleaning the House*. The work is part of a series of participatory exercises following the Abramović method. Visitors are invited to sit facing each other in twos and to look into each other's eyes. The exercise is designed to make visitors arrive in the present moment and to feel a connection with their own inner selves and that of the other person.



Counting the Rice, 2015

“We are living in a difficult period where time is worth more and more because we have less and less of it. (...) I hope that participants will connect with themselves and with the present—the elusive moment of the here and now.”

Marina Abramović, in: *The Cleaner*, 2017

Counting the Rice is an exercise for visitors who are invited to take a seat at a long table and to count or sort grains of rice and lentils. The exercise is designed to instill a sense of calm, concentration and attentiveness.



Biography Marina Abramović

1946

Marina Abramović is born on 30 November in Belgrade, former Yugoslavia. Her parents Vojo and Danica Abramović were Yugoslav partisans during World War II, and both hold high positions in the public sector under General Tito's communist party. Later on this commitment leads to high positions in the public sector: her father works with state security and her mother becomes head of the Museum of Art and the Revolution in Belgrade. Until the age of six Abramović lives with her maternal grandmother, a devotee of the Orthodox Church. Her early childhood is deeply influenced by her grandmother's faith.

1953–1958

The Abramović family does not celebrate holidays or festivals together and rarely expresses their emotions. The proximity to art and culture, however, is clear. From an early age Marina is encouraged to express herself creatively through drawing and painting and at twelve is given her own studio at home.

1960–1965

Painting lessons.

1965–1970

Studies painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade. During this period, her earlier figurative expressions become increasingly abstract. Abramović starts painting clouds, and the motif recurs in ever-changing forms in several of her works from her school years.

1970–1973

Postdiploma studies at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb. Abramović begins to use her body as a tool in her art. She starts experimenting with sound and performance. Marina spends most of her time at the SKC (Studentski Kulturni Centar), a student cultural center in Belgrade founded by Tito in 1968. There she gets to know young conceptual artists such as Raša Todorović (b. 1945), Zoran Popović and Neša Paripović (b. 1942).

1973

First public performance, Rhythm 10, at The Edinburgh Festival. Meets the artist Joseph Beuys (1921–1986) for the first time. Participates in a performance by the boundary breaking Viennese actionist Hermann Nitsch (b. 1938).

1974

At SKC Marina Abramović performs the work Rhythm 5. In the same year, Rhythm 4 is presented at Galleria Diagramma in Milan, as well as the last work in the series, Rhythm 0, in the gallery Studio Morra in Naples.

1975

Meets German artist Ulay (Frank Uwe Laysiepen, b. 1943) in Amsterdam on their shared birthday, 30 November. Abramović performs in Belgrade, Edinburgh, Innsbruck, Tübingen, Berlin, Amsterdam and Copenhagen.



1976

Abramović starts now collaborating with Ulay. They realize their first joint performance, Relation in Space, at the 37th Biennale di Venezia. She leaves Belgrade and moves in with Ulay in Amsterdam.

1977–1979

The duo decide to replace their fixed living place with a nomadic life in a Citroën van. For three years they drive and work across all of Europe.

1980–1981

Ulay and Abramović travel to Australia and live with the Pintupi tribe for nine months. Influenced by aboriginal culture, they create the performance piece Nightsea Crossing.

1982

Nightsea Crossing is performed at documenta 7 in Kassel. Abramović and Ulay travel to Bodhgaya, India, in order to practice the meditation technique vipassana. Meet the Dalai Lama and his oldest mentor, the Tulku Kyabje Ling Rinpoche.

1983

The duo realize a four day long joint performance Nightsea Crossing Conjunction with a Tibetan lama and an Aboriginal medicine man in the Netherlands.

1986

The series of Nightsea Crossing performances ends after six years with a performance at the Musée Saint Pierre d'art Contemporain in Lyon. Travels to China.

1988

After years of preparation, the duo gains permission to walk on the Great Wall of China for their performance The Lovers. Abramović and Ulay walk from opposite ends meeting in the middle after 90 days. This marks the end of their twelve years' romantic and artistic relationship. The work is shown at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk in 1990.

1989

Abramović starts her new category of work, the interactive Transitory Objects, influenced by geology as well as Chinese and Tibetan medicine.

1990

Marina Abramović moves to Paris, but keeps her house in Amsterdam. Through her early interests in Eastern philosophy, she's invited to participate in the notable exhibition Magiciens de la Terre at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. Soon after the group exhibition, The Lovers is shown at the same museum.

1991

Guest professor at Hochschule der Künste, Berlin and at the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Paris.



1995

*A retrospective exhibition at Oxford's Museum of Modern Art.
The performance piece Cleaning the House is staged at the Sean Kelly Gallery in New York.*

1996

The retrospective Marina Abramović: Objects, Performance, Video, Sound opens at Stedelijk Museum voor Aktuele Kunst in Ghent and is also shown at Brandts Klædefabrik in Odense. Participates in the exhibition NowHere at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk.

1997

Abramović is awarded the Golden Lion prize for Balkan Baroque at the 47th Biennale di Venezia.

1998

*Abramović becomes a professor at Hochschule für Bildende Künste, Braunschweig.
Develops the workshop Cleaning the House, a series of exercises in concentration and presence of mind.*

1999

In Mundgod, India Abramović choreographs a performance together with Tibetan monks for the Festival of Sacred Music in Brüssow.

2000–2001

Vojo Abramović dies in Belgrade. A year later the video piece The Hero, dedicated to her father, is produced.

2000

The interactive project Dream House opens in conjunction with Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial in Japan. The dream house is decorated with colours and furniture in precious materials that are meant to stimulate dreams. The work is installed permanently.

2002

Moves to New York.

2004

The Art Institute of Chicago gives Abramović an honorary doctorate. She travels to Belgrade to develop the video project Balkan Erotic Epic and also participates in the 2004 biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York.

2005

Seven Easy Pieces is presented at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York. The work consists of seven re-stagings of performances by Valie Export, Vito Acconci, Bruce Nauman, Gina Pane, Joseph Beuys, and Marina Abramović herself.



2007

Danica Abramović dies in Belgrade.

2010

The long durational performance The Artist is Present is realized at MoMA in New York as part of the retrospective exhibition of the same title.

Abramović founds Marina Abramović Institute (MAI), which is to work across the sciences in order to draft a theoretical and practical platform for performance art.

2014

The exhibition 512 Hours is presented at London's Serpentine Gallery. The project is a series of interactive exercises that have their starting points in the artist's own work process, in which the audience participates.

2016

The Memoir Walk Through Walls by Marina Abramović is released in the USA and translated in 21 languages.

2017–2018

The extensive european retrospective Marina Abramović – The Cleaner is shown at Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter in Oslo, Bundeskunsthalle in Bonn and Palazzo Strozzi in Florence.

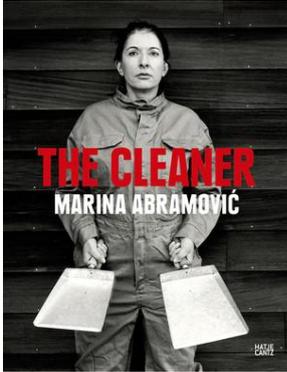
2017–2020

The Royal Library presents Abramović Method for Treasures, which was created especially for the exhibition of selected treasures in the annex of the library, The Black Diamond.

Future Project for 2019

Alte Oper Frankfurt: Anders hören: Die Abramović-Methode für Musik.

Publication



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Marina Abramović. The Cleaner

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Current and Upcoming Exhibitions

TRACES IN SPACE

An Exhibition of Grant-Holders of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation's Artist's Programme

until 22 April 2018

Five artists embark on a journey. Exploring the interplay between intimacy and distance, they create ambivalent experiential spaces in which the familiar becomes strange and the strange familiar. The artists' sense of their own situatedness and position remains fleeting, decampment and departure are already envisaged. Working in different formal idioms and media – photography, text, sculpture and installation – Stef Heidhues, Veronika Kellndorfer, Cyrill Lachauer, Alexej Meschtschanow and Hans-Christian Schink formulate spatial experiences that briefly touch upon the question what truth might actually mean.

In the exhibition, the participating artists leave traces of their encounters and lay them as trails. Visitors following their lead do not so much experience coherent stories as layers of disparate experiences that elude documentary cartography despite recognisable spatial and historical references. Ambivalence becomes the criterion of artistic practice and the precondition for insight.

Each of the artists is a grant-holder of the EHF 2010 trustee programme.

“GERMANY IS NOT AN ISLAND”

Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany

Acquisitions 2012-2016

until 3 June 2018

The exhibition presents a selection of works acquired over the last five years by a specialist committee for the Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany. It includes works by renowned young artists. The acquisitions testify to the high standard of the Federal Collection and show how historical and current developments, collective viewing habits and the questioning of image constructs translate into contemporary art. Ranging from large-scale installations to drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, video and sound works, the selection bears witness to the wealth of media and techniques that distinguish contemporary artistic practice.

An exhibition of the Bundeskunsthalle in cooperation with the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media

NAZCA – DIVINE DRAWINGS

Archaeological Discoveries

10 May to 16 September 2018

In the southern Peruvian desert, one of the biggest archaeological mysteries is waiting to be solved: the giant geoglyphs of the Nazca culture of ca. 200 BC – 650 AD.

There has been endless speculation about the meaning of the Nazca Lines. But it



was not until recently that archaeological research has provided clues to the worldview and culture of the Nazca.

The exhibition takes visitors on a fascinating journey into the mysterious southern Peru of the Nazca period. It invites them to marvel at rich funerary gifts from vast burial complexes, images of strange flying beings – half human, half animal – on colourful ceramic vessels and the most stunningly beautiful archaeological textile finds. Many of the exhibits have never been shown outside Peru. The geoglyphs, some of which extend over several kilometres on the arid plateau between the towns of Nazca and Palpa, are presented in modern multimedia installations.

An exhibition of the Museo de Arte de Lima – MALI – and the Museum Rietberg, Zürich, in cooperation with the Bundeskunsthalle

THE PLAYGROUND PROJECT

Outdoor

31 May to 28 October 2018

To complement The Playground Project (from 13 July), the Bundeskunsthalle is opening the roof garden and the forecourt to Outdoor, an exhibition on the subject of 'Play', which provides contemporary artists Nevin Aladag, Kristina Buch, Olafur Eliasson, Jeppe Hein, Carsten Höller, Christian Jankowski, Llobet & Pons, Michel Majerus, Andreas Schmitten, Thomas Schütte, Superflex, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Alvaro Urbano and Ina Weber with an opportunity to design interactive installations and spaces, forms and utensil for play. Visitors are invited to experience art in a playful, participatory and performative manner. According to a philosophical definition of Homo ludens, play is a primary condition of the generation of culture, because it is through play that Homo ludens, unlike Homo faber, develops his skills. It is in play as a fundamental, formative and necessary human activity that he discovers his individual qualities, and this experience allows him to develop his dormant personality. In this definition, play is equated with freedom and autonomy of mind.

CARSTEN HÖLLER

Bonner Rutschbahn / Bonn Slide

from 31 May 2018

The Stockholm-based Belgian artist Carsten Höller has developed a site-specific slide connecting the roof and the forecourt for the entrance façade of the Bundeskunsthalle. Höller's sculpture and Gustav Peichl's architecture enter into a respectful symbiotic relationship that allows the visitor to see both in a new light that brings together the hitherto separate qualities of aesthetics and functionalism. The slide will be inaugurated as part of the exhibition The Playground Project – Outdoor, but will remain in place for several years to be enjoyed during the outdoor season.

Carsten Höller conceives of the museum as a space that is not just devoted to the preservation of the old, but also to experimentation, innovation and to trying out unexpected ideas and concepts. He expands the medium of sculpture,



turning it into a platform for playful activities that transform the physical and emotional experience of the viewer/visitor into an integral and central part of his art.

VAJIKO CHACHKHIANI

Heavy Metal Honey

29 June to 7 October 2018

Vajiko Chachkhiani's works explore existential questions of life and our culture of remembrance. They are notable for the conceptual intelligence and quiet poetry with which he invests even violent themes such as war and death.

Looking more closely, the viewer can share in the thought processes and research of the Georgian artist. He retells allegories of everyday life in seemingly familiar images but subtly undermines them with unexpected twists. The artist's films, sculptures, photographs and extensive installations suggest different paths and weave them into a unified whole.

For the exhibition in Bonn, Chachkhiani develops a film and sculpture installation that reflects the cycle of life and the parallelism of stories. Heavy metal in the ground stands as a metaphor for history and honey – sweet but viscous – as a metaphor for internal family structures. Global and individual history share points of intersection at which they are inextricably linked. And it is only the moment of action and recognition that can flip a switch and set stories/history on a different course that changes the narrative.

Subject to change!

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