



ALTE OPER

FRANKFURT



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A DIFFERENT WAY OF HEARING:

THE ABRAMOVIĆ METHOD FOR MUSIC
20 - 24 MARCH 2019

Performance artist Marina Abramović develops a music project for Alte Oper Frankfurt

Marina Abramović, one of the world's most known and influential artists, will create a new project combining large scale public participatory art and music specifically for the Alte Oper in March 2019. As a central figure of performance and art for nearly 50 years, Marina Abramović explores the possibilities of body and mind, searching for personal and collective connection and transformation. The Abramović Method for Music was originally conceived in 2015 for the first time for Goldberg, a performance of Bach's Goldberg Variations performed by Igor Levit at the Park Avenue Armory in New York. At the Alte Oper in Frankfurt, Abramović will continue to develop this concept with collaborator, Lynsey Peisinger. A Different Way of Hearing: The Abramović Method for Music, will be a unique and unprecedented community event in which the public encounters music through the lens of performance art and a communal sense of mindfulness.

Listening to live classical music often happens on a superficial level and in a scripted way, as we are too distracted by the tempo of life, external circumstances, thoughts, stress or smartphones. With that said, how can listening to music take place as an authentic, moving, profound, and transcendental experience? How can we manage to find ourselves in music? Where lies the path to new openness, receptivity, and vulnerability? How do we focus our listening energy on the music and concentrate? In the midst of our busy lives, can we transform how we experience music?

The body has always been both the subject and medium of Marina Abramović's artistic work. Exploring the physical and mental limits of her being, she has withstood pain, exhaustion, and danger in the quest for emotional and spiritual transformation. Abramović's concern is with the simple actions of everyday life, such as lying, sitting, dreaming, thinking, seeing – and also listening. She ritualizes these daily



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activities in her performances, thus manifesting and condensing a unique mental state. Marina Abramović's name is inseparably tied to some of the earliest and most historic performance pieces, and her important work continues to this day. A common characteristic of many of her pieces is long duration, which requires time, endurance, and stamina from both herself and the participants.

A Different Way of Hearing: The Abramović Method For Music

From this artistic conception, Marina Abramović has developed her own method over the decades, bringing together her central convictions. She defines the Abramović Method as a communal, participatory event that unites people with themselves and with one another through a shared experience. The audience takes part in a number of exercises in a non-discriminatory and non-hierarchical setting. The exercises include for example counting grains of rice, looking into someone's eyes for an extended period, walking in slow-motion, seeing colours, and experiencing the space blindfolded. The participants decide for themselves which exercises to do and for how long. "I used to tell them what to do," says Marina Abramović, "now I believe it's important to have a choice." She is convinced that these exercises are the way back to one's self. "We have to learn how we can gain free time back for ourselves. The only way to emerge is with some long durational activities based on repetition." Her inspiration came from looking at ancient cultures.

Everyone Is Welcome

Marina Abramović has now devised a project for the Alte Oper in which the audience can arrive at a completely new experience of hearing music using the A Different Way of Hearing: The Abramović Method For Music, a project in which the exercises of the method are inseparably linked with the act of attending a concert. In the Great Hall of the Alte Oper, participants will come together to experience the exercises of the Abramović Method in groups lasting several hours. The invitation is open to everyone without restriction: No special experience or prior training is required. Everyone is welcome to take part in exercises such as counting the rice, looking at colours, or perceiving the space in absolute silence using noise-cancelling headphones. All of these exercises have the goal of sharpening the senses, focusing the mind, and finding oneself – or establishing contact with others.

Intensified Perception of Music

For this event, Marina Abramović is combining the exercises of the Method For Music with a concert. Participants that engage physically and mentally with the purifying effects of the exercises will have the opportunity to experience the subsequent concert on a deeper level. For this reason, participation in the Abramović Method and admittance to the concert are inseparably combined as a unit. The participants



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enter into the concert, which is – like many of Abramović's works – marked by its long duration. The audience as well as the musicians (who also participate in the method beforehand) will share an experience in a long evening program.

WED 20 – SUN 24 MARCH

(closing concert on 24 March)

Participation is open to anyone interested with a minimum age of 16 years without restriction and requires no prior experience. Details on the procedure, single concert dates for the Abramović Method, the cast and concert program as well as on advanced ticket sales will be announced in autumn 2018 on www.alteoper.de/abramovic. There, you can subscribe to our project newsletter as well.



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Courtesy of Marina Abramović Archives.