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Editors. "Exclusive video: Marina Abramovic advises public to complain to a tree to help heal from 2020." The Art Newspaper. November 27, 2020.

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→ MARINA ABRAMOVIC

Exclusive video: Marina Abramovic advises public to complain to a tree to help heal from 2020

Complain to a Tree is the latest addition to the "Abramovic Method", a series of exercises developed by the artist for practicing being present, which she will reveal on a new Sky Arts programme



"Trees are like human beings," says the performance artist [Marina Abramovic](#). "They have intelligence. They have feelings. They communicate with each other. And also, they are perfectly silent listeners. You can complain to them." And letting out your frustrations about a dire 2020 to a tree is exactly the advice the artist is giving the public.

The participatory performance *Complain to a Tree* is the latest addition to the "Abramovic Method"—a series of exercises developed by the artist for practicing being present—which she will reveal on a new Sky Arts programme. Abramovic is taking over the TV channel for five hours on 5 December, to teach audiences about performance art.

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Abramovic will be the first artist to take over Sky Arts, which has had an ambitious overhaul and [went free in the UK in September](#). "For Sky Arts to give an artist five hours to do what they want is like a revolution. I feel an incredible responsibility that it should not be the last time: we have to really work, and we have to reach as many viewers as possible—especially, we're targeting young viewers. After the five hours of this programme, everybody will know what performance art is, I hope," Abramovic tells *The Art Newspaper*.

Here are Abramovic's full instructions for *Complain to a Tree*

One important thing is that you really choose a tree that you like. It can be small and even not that beautiful a tree. But you have some relation to this tree, emotionally. Don't pick the tree because of the beauty of the tree. Pick the tree because of its smell, the bark, the leaves. Whatever triggers your affection. So look around, and take the tree you like.

Don't immediately hug the tree. Just feel the energy of the tree. Even not touching it but just holding your hands a little bit above.

And then complain your heart into it. This is the whole idea. Have any of you ever complained to a tree before? No. So this is something that you will be doing for the first time. This is like a journey into the unknown. So get out of your security box and do something that is different.

I hope we can create some kind of trend, that actually people are going to run to the parks and start complaining to the trees. This is one way of healing at this moment of our history.

Complaining to the tree is also a way of getting energy out of the tree—to you. And healing you. So the tree is actually healing the complaint. You're opening your heart. You're just telling all your negativity and what bothers you in your life. And the tree is a silent listener. And everything is absorbed into the bark of the tree. And you feel rejuvenated. You feel happy after that.

This is the message for the public. Please—go to the park near you. Pick the tree you like. Hold the tree tight. Really tight. And just pour your heart into it. Complain to the tree, for a minimum of 15 minutes. It's the best healing that you can do.