

SEANKELLY

Hutchinson, Kate. "9: A Lockdown Special with Marina Abramović." *The Last Bohemians*. March 8, 2021.



For International Women's Day 2021, *The Last Bohemians* returns with a special lockdown episode, supported by KLOORIS, starring Marina Abramović: the groundbreaking Serbian artist and self-described "godmother of performance art" who has spent the past 50 years confronting the mental and physical limits of the body and using it as a powerful canvas. Her early work in the 1970s is famed for its extremity, with pieces where she would cut the communist star into her stomach or invite an audience to use weapons on her if they pleased. It was a radical thread she continued when she teamed up with Ulay, her one-time creative collaborator and former lover, who passed away just before the pandemic struck in 2020. Their final piece together in 1988, where they each walked from one end of The Great Wall of China and met in the middle, is one of the most elaborate break-ups of all time. Since then, Abramović, 74, has become known for intertwining performance art with spirituality, shamanism and pop culture: she trained Lady Gaga in her 'Marina Abramović Method', starred in a Jay-Z video and turned her attentions to durational works. These feats of endurance include her infamous piece *The Artist is Present*, at the MoMa in New York in 2010, where she spent some 700 hours sitting silently across a table from spectators – over 1,500 people came to sit opposite her. Many of them were moved to tears, though critics have accused her over the years of being an exhibitionist and a narcissist. In this interview, conducted via Zoom from her home in upstate New York at the start of 2021, Abramović talks about creative fearlessness, the importance of failure and taking risks, why she never had children, why we should be hugging trees and what she has in common with the opera singer Maria Callas, on whom she has based her own mixed-media performance (and which will return to the stage later this year following its pre-pandemic premiere last April). A retrospective of her life's work, meanwhile – her first major exhibition in the UK – will now be showing in 2023.

Presenter: Kate Hutchinson

Producer: Holly Fisher/ident

Emmy The Great/Logo: Rebecca Strickson

www.thelastbohemians.co.uk

Instagram: @thelastbohemianspod

With thanks to KLOORIS (www.kloriscbd.com), the Marina Abramović Institute, Lisson Gallery, Irma Crusat, Laura Martin at Real Life PR, Ali Gardiner and Toni and Andy Shaw.

Music used in this episode: Daniel Birch - Indigo Moon
Daniel Birch - Indigo Shore
Chad Crouch - Algorithms
Lobo Loco - Deepest Breath
Salakapakka Sound System - Kapina
Tiibetissa Siddhartha Corsus - Victory of Buddha
Sputnic - Spiritual Dreams
Tortue Super Sonic - Klezmer Uno