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This week, the high priestess of performance art joins the podcast.



Marina Abramovic, in a still from the 2019 film Body of Truth. © Indi Film. Courtesy of WeTransfer.

Welcome to the Art Angle, a podcast from Artnet News that delves into the places where the art world meets the real world, bringing each week's biggest story down to earth. Join us every week for an in-depth look at what matters most in museums, the art market, and much more with input from our own writers and editors, as well as artists, curators, and other top experts in the field.



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These days, as contemporary art continues to pervade pop culture, there are art stars—i.e. the talents who captivate the attention of art professionals, and then there are superstars—the handful of figures who have broken through to legitimate fame, winning a spot in the minds of the public at large.

If you ask me the most appealing of all of these titans is Marina Abramovic. the high priestess of performance art whose unforgettable work plumbs eternal, profound themes of life and death, whose impact on art history is huge and undeniable, but who is nonetheless in person just a lovely, brilliant, hilarious, vivacious human being.

Given her biography, that might not be what you'd expect. Growing up the child of two emotionally cold war-era parents in Belgrade, she developed a particularly arduous strain of performance art, and fought an uphill battle for most of her astonishing five decade career in an art world that gave practically no support institutional or financial—to her chosen medium of performance. Her closest artistic collaborator, her long-time lover Ulay, betrayed her in spectacular fashion in a way that has entered art history, and then, after they reconciled years later, sued her.

But despite all of this, when success came such as with her 1997 Golden Lion win at the Venice Biennale and then her blockbuster, 2010 survey at MoMA, what has been most palpable is her enormous enjoyment of her career and its accomplishments. Now, that career is about to once again be surveyed in an oeuvre spanning show at Sean Kelly Gallery in New York.