

SEANKELLY

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8 MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ

Following the triumphant 2013 Kickstarter campaign to raise seed funds for her Marina Abramović Institute (MAI), the ‘grandmother of performance art’ has found the remaining \$31 million required for the Hudson, New York, headquarters somewhat harder to extract. Numerous events held at Art Basel Miami Beach last year brought in precisely zip. Clearly narked with celebs paying lip service but failing to dig deep, Abramović started a beef with Jay Z, suggesting he’d ‘used’ her for his 2013 Picasso Baby stunt, before issuing an apology when it turned out ‘Hova’ had in fact coughed up. While she may not be feeling the love from the global ultrarich (or the artworld in-crowd – one prominent critic dismissively described her as a ‘crossover star’ earlier this year), Abramović’s popular status continues to blossom.

In 2015 she focused her considerable charisma on the Southern Hemisphere, with extended residencies in both Brazil (at SESC Pompeia, São Paulo) and Australia (Kaldor Public Art Projects, Sydney, and MONA, Hobart). It’s not just the artist who was present: these days she brings an itinerant version of the MAI, which runs workshops (in Brazil, 250 Abramović Method sessions were held with a total of 14,264 participants) and helps mentor local performance artists whose work is presented under the MAI banner. Between the crystal therapy, the mass group-hugs and the recent announcement that she wanted a trinity of interments (with coffins in Amsterdam, Belgrade and New York), it’s hard not to ponder where the tipping point might be between cult artist and cult actual.

- 1 Iwan & Manuela Wirth
- 2 Ai Weiwei
- 3 David Zwirner
- 4 Hans Ulrich Obrist
& Julia Peyton-Jones
- 5 Nicholas Serota
- 6 Larry Gagosian
- 7 Glenn D. Lowry
- 8 Marina Abramović
- 9 Adam D. Weinberg
- 10 Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev