

do it (australia)

Learning activities
Lesson 3

Kaldor Public Art Projects

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Activity 3

Not a sprint, but a marathon: Time and space

do it is the longest-running exhibition in the world. But what is an “open-ended” exhibition? Can an artwork be repeated in multiple locations, by different people, at different times?

Watch

Watch *Counting Rice Exercise*, a short animated video by the Marina Abramović Institute. (Duration: 1:12 mins).

This video illustrates one of several exercises created by artist Marina Abramović, which aim to develop patience, concentration, self-control and willpower.

React

After watching the video, write down a list of 5 words to describe your immediate reaction: **How would you feel doing this exercise?**



Marina Abramović
Counting Rice Exercise, 2013.
Art Direction by
Marina Abramović,
animation by
Arianna Vairo.

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Do it

1. For this activity, you will start by working alone, and then exchange your work with a partner.
2. Choose a simple everyday action, such as walking a few paces in a straight line, brushing your teeth, sharpening a pencil, folding a shirt, or opening a drink bottle. Each partner should choose a different instruction.
3. Working alone, perform this action as quietly and slowly as possible, with complete focus.
4. Try to pay attention to each of your senses as you perform the action. If you are holding an object, how does it feel in your hand? How does the weight shift as you move? What sounds do you notice?
5. Repeat the action 10 times without stopping – again, as quietly and slowly as possible, and with complete focus. Try timing yourself with a stopwatch or phone.
6. Once you have completed, write a set of instructions for this everyday action. Be as detailed and specific as possible. Try to imagine that your reader has never done this activity before.
7. Swap instructions with your partner, and follow each other's instructions as closely as possible.

Reflect

- How did it feel to give so much attention to an everyday action? What did you notice?
- What was the effect of repetition? Was it the same or different each time? What happened to your movements? List all the changes that you noticed, no matter how small.
- What emotions did you feel? Did you become more aware of different senses, such as touch or smell? More aware of your breathing?
- Was there a difference between your sense of time and the actual time passing?
- What happened when you swapped with your partner, and interpreted their instruction? Did it have the same effect on you? Was your interpretation the same as your partner's, or different? Discuss the reasons for these differences.

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Further research and discussion

- *Each realization of do it occurs as an activity in time and space...*
– Hans Ulrich Obrist

Premised on the realization of artworks that otherwise exist only as sets of instructions by participating artists, the exhibition has become a delirious exercise of repetition and difference.

– Andreas Slominski

Research the background of *do it*. Why is the project defined as an “open-ended exhibition” or “exhibition in progress”?

Find 3-4 examples of artist instructions from past or current presentations of *do it*. How does each artist define or measure time and space in their instructions? How do they allow for “repetition and difference”? If the instruction can be repeated anywhere, at any time, is there an ‘original’ artwork? Referring to these examples of instructions, discuss how *do it* challenges traditional ideas of the ‘original’ and the ‘copy’ of an artwork.

Since 1993, *do it* has been presented all over the world. What is the role of local communities in each new presentation of *do it*? Referring to 1-2 examples, discuss the importance of local context to the project. Focusing on ideas of time (duration) and space (location), discuss how *do it* challenges conventional understandings of an exhibition.

- For the 30th Kaldor Public Art Project: *Marina Abramović, In Residence, 2015*, audiences were required to leave their phones, watches, cameras and all electronic devices in lockers. As Marina Abramović said:
They're arriving into the space with nothing. I'm there for them. They're my living material, and I'm their living material. And from this nothing, something may or may not happen. It's the journey, it's the experiment.

Read through the education kit for Kaldor Public Art Project 30: *Marina Abramović, In Residence*, and discuss the following:

How do watches, phones and computers affect our perception of time? How would you feel leaving your possessions to enter an art project? Without time and connections to the outside world, how might audiences have experienced the exhibition?

Research the work of 2-3 artists who explore ideas of time and duration, such as Marina Abramović, John Cage, Andy Warhol, Christian Marclay or Tehching Hsieh. What is ‘durational art’? How do these artists use ‘duration’ as a material? What are some of the ways in which they mark or measure time? Referring to 1-2 examples of work from each artist, discuss the effect of repetition and difference in their work.

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References

do it (around the world)

Kaldor Public Art Project 36: *do it (australia)*

<http://doit.kaldorartprojects.org.au/>

do it (around the world), Google Arts & Culture

<https://artsandculture.google.com/project/do-it>

do it (around the world), Serpentine Galleries, London

<https://www.serpentinegalleries.org/exhibitions-events/do-it-around-world>

do it (home), Independent Curators International

<https://curatorsintl.org/special-projects/do-it>

Kaldor Public Art Projects

Kaldor Public Art Projects learning resources

<http://kaldorartprojects.org.au/education/learning-resources/project-resources/index>

Marina Abramović

Kaldor Public Art Project 30: *Marina Abramović, In Residence*, 2015

<http://kaldorartprojects.org.au/projects/marina-abramovic>

Kaldor Public Art Project 30: *Marina Abramović, In Residence*, 2015

Education Kit

<https://bit.ly/3d2eLfU>

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<https://theconversation.com/the-mystical-stillness-of-marina-abramovic-in-sydney-43640>

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Live and ephemeral art

Khan Academy, Performance Art: An introduction

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-1010/conceptual-and-performance-art/performanceart/a/performance-art-an-introduction>

MCA Australia, Ephemeral and performance art

<https://www.mca.com.au/learn/learning-resources/ephemeral-and-performance-art/>

MoMA Learning, Media and Performance Art

https://www.moma.org/learn/moma_learning/themes/media-and-performance-art/participation-and-audience-involvement/

Tate Learning, Ephemeral Art

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/e/ephemeral-art>

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