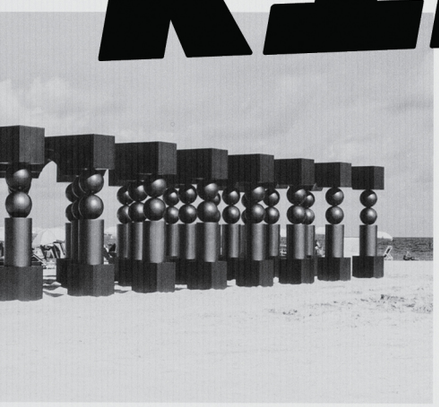
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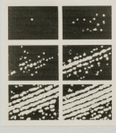


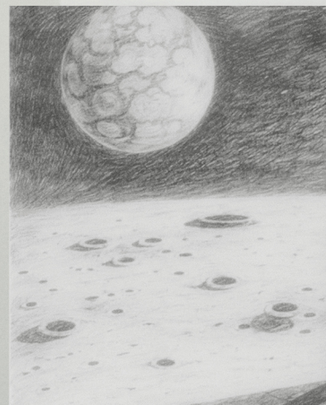












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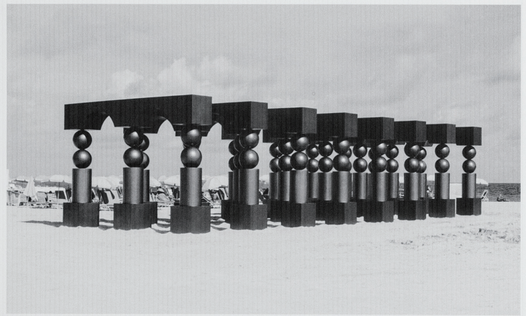
in conversation

PILAR ZETA with **MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ**

PILAR ZETA

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IN CONVERSATION WITH

MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ





I met Marina Abramović a few years ago through my best friend and artist, Hugo Huerta Marín, who is very close to her. The first thing she said to me was:

“I know everything about you.”

while staring directly into my eyes, completely still, as if she were reading something behind me. It felt like being seen in a way that was almost uncomfortable, but impossible to look away from.

We connected instantly, and even though our practices and the way we create and move through the world come from almost opposite directions, there is something underneath that aligns. A shared language that is beyond matter. Something closer to energy, to symbols, to things that exist before they take form.

I’ve always been interested in that space. The invisible and bizarre architecture behind reality. Metaphysical principles, esoteric systems, symbols, the unknown, the bizarre, the inner world, intention, and the things we can’t fully prove or touch.

Over the years, I began developing a book, Still Figuring Out Reality, where I explore my work, how it manifests, and the larger question of how reality itself is constructed. Behind my practice are years of existential questioning, going deeper in search of answers, often entering states of chaos. I move in cycles, like a pendulum, between feeling completely centered and completely disconnected. I spend long periods in isolation, looking inward, becoming absorbed in conspiracies and the unexplained mysteries of the world we live in.

My body becomes part of that process.

I go to extremes. I lose structure, then I rebuild it. I move through confusion, intensity, and clarity again. And through that movement, something opens.

I question everything. How does reality actually work? How does creativity move through us, and where do ideas come from? How do we connect to something beyond ourselves to create? What role does intention play in shaping what we bring into the physical world? Is there a hidden structure, whether quantum, symbolic, or something else, guiding it all?

Marina was the first person I had this conversation with.

PZ: How do you experience reality, and what role does imagination play in shaping it?

MA: Reality is not connected to imagination. I prefer to be in the present. For me, it is enough to experience what is here, without adding anything to it. Imagination is not something I rely on. Being present is already complete.

PZ: I experience imagination as another layer of reality. Sometimes I enter it so deeply that the present dissolves, and when I return, it disappears as if it was never there. I move between states...

PZ: Where do you think ideas come from, and how do you open yourself to receive more inspiration and intuition?

MA: First you have to make yourself empty to create space for the idea to come in. If you are too full, nothing can enter. So you slow down, you become quiet, and then the idea arrives on its own.

PZ: I feel that emptiness too, but it feels full. Like ideas already exist, waiting to be born.

PZ: What drives you to create, even in moments of total solitude?

MA: I don’t know the answer to this. I just wake up with the urge to create. It’s something that is always there, independent of others. I don’t question it, I just follow it.

PZ: What is your relationship with symbols in your work?

MA: Symbols are important to understand when they appear in front of you. You don’t force them or search for them. When they come, you recognize them and pay attention. That is enough.

PZ: That’s how I see it as well, symbols are the meaning we give to what reality is presenting. They become a kind of guidance, like a way of reading the different layers of what’s in front of us...

PZ: How do you bring an idea into form — what does your process of turning a vision into matter look like?

MA: It is like giving birth. Painful but in the end satisfying. Because the result comes anyway. The process is more important because it is a journey where you change, and you don’t always see the result immediately.

The more difficult the journey, the more strength and energy it requires from you, and the more you appreciate it. The journey is what creates the change, not the destination.

PZ: I experience that pain through chaos and in that chaos, I look for guidance to find some kind of order. And through that order, I feel like I’m finally arriving at something.



PZ: Where is a better place to create, do you work in your studio?

MA: No, I don't have a home. I don't have a studio either. I hate studios and believe they are bad for the artist. They make artists lazy and redundant. I prefer to go out and do research. I like to go to places away from civilization, where there is no electricity, no comfort.

Those are my favorite places. I'm interested in nature, in different cultures, in people who have something to tell us that we don't already know. I expose myself to life and get my ideas that way. The planet is my home. If you travel enough, you understand that staying in one place limits you.

PZ: I love working in my own space, so for me it's almost the opposite. But I'm constantly changing it, destroying and rebuilding it. My environment needs to match my personality, my internal state.

PZ: Do you believe that belief itself can change reality? How do you build belief in a creative project to help it succeed?

MA: When I believe in something, it's my reality. It's nothing to change. I don't try to build belief. If it is there, then everything follows from that.

PZ: There's this idea I'm obsessed with in quantum physics, that we might be living in multiple realities at once, that everything is happening simultaneously and we're just moving through different versions of it. In my work I feel that, like sometimes I wake up and my perception has completely shifted, as if I've entered another layer of the same world. How does the idea that we might live in multiple realities at once influence your art or perception?

MA: I don't understand the question. I never take drugs. It's not something I work with or think about.

PZ: (laughs) I know, it is a very far-fetched concept. Maybe it's just about how infinite our perception on reality is, how easily it shifts without us noticing.

PZ: What helps you reconnect to flow when you feel distant from your creativity?

MA: I go to nature. Find the source. Being there brings me back without effort. It resets everything. Nature is something we need to spend more time with, especially in places that are not populated. Waterfalls, rock formations, mountains, volcanoes.

I love volcanoes. I can sit and watch them for hours. You understand things just by sitting and observing. You don't need to do anything. You can feel thousands of sensations just by looking at the night sky. That is enough.

PZ: I feel that too. Nature brings me back to something that is already in balance. Even looking at the smallest beings, insects, it feels like the inner world and the outer world collapse into each other, like there is no separation.

PZ: Do you ever feel that your work is also creating you?

MA: Yes always. Work changes me, not the other way around. Through the process, I am transformed little by little.

PZ: I feel that constantly. I enter the work thinking I'm shaping it, but it rearranges me instead, like I'm the material. It almost feels like it has control over me.

PZ: How do you experience the presence of your higher self when you are performing, and which project made you feel most connected to it?

MA: Yes I do. It's a very clear feeling when it happens. I don't feel like explaining more than that. Good art always has a spiritual component.

Without it, the work does not transcend.

Every century has only a few artists who create something that lasts, and they all carry this element in their work. It gives depth, and it allows the work to exist beyond its time.