VOICES

AN ARTIST’S LIFE MANIFESTO

Marina Abramović
An artist’s conduct in his life:
• An artist should not lie to himself or others
• An artist should not steal ideas from other artists
• An artist should not compromise for himself or in regard to the art market
• An artist should not kill other human beings
• An artist should not make himself into an idol
• An artist should not make himself into an idol
• An artist should not make himself into an idol

An artist’s relation to his love life:
• An artist should avoid falling in love with another artist
• An artist should avoid falling in love with another artist
• An artist should avoid falling in love with another artist

An artist’s relation to the erotic:
• An artist should develop an erotic point of view on the world
• An artist should be erotic
• An artist should be erotic
• An artist should be erotic

An artist’s relation to suffering:
• An artist should suffer
• From the suffering comes the best work
• Suffering brings transformation
• Through the suffering an artist transcends his spirit
• Through the suffering an artist transcends his spirit
• Through the suffering an artist transcends his spirit

An artist’s relation to depression:
• An artist should not be depressed
• Depression is a disease and should be cured
• Depression is not productive for an artist
• Depression is not productive for an artist
• Depression is not productive for an artist

An artist’s relation to suicide:
• Suicide is a crime against life
• An artist should not commit suicide
• An artist should not commit suicide

An artist’s relation to inspiration:
• An artist should look deep inside himself for inspiration
• The deeper he looks inside himself, the more universal he becomes
• The artist is universe
• The artist is universe
• The artist is universe

An artist’s relation to self-control:
• The artist should not have self-control about his life
• The artist should have total self-control about his work
• The artist should not have self-control about his life
• The artist should have total self-control about his work

An artist’s relation with transparency:
• The artist should give and receive at the same time
• Transparency means receptive
• Transparency means to give
• Transparency means to receive
• Transparency means receptive
• Transparency means to give
• Transparency means to receive
• Transparency means receptive
• Transparency means to give

An artist’s relation to symbols:
• An artist creates his own symbols
• Symbols are an artist’s language
• The language must then be translated
• Sometimes it is difficult to find the key
• Sometimes it is difficult to find the key
• Sometimes it is difficult to find the key

An artist’s relation to silence:
• An artist has to understand silence
• An artist has to create a space for silence to enter his work
• Silence is like an island in the middle of a turbulent ocean
• Silence is like an island in the middle of a turbulent ocean
• Silence is like an island in the middle of a turbulent ocean

Photo: Colin S. Johnson
An artist’s relation to solitude:

- An artist must make time for long periods of solitude
- Solitude is extremely important
- Away from home
- Away from the studio
- Away from family
- Away from friends
- An artist should stay for long periods of time at waterfalls
- An artist should stay for long periods of time at exploding volcanoes
- An artist should stay for long periods of time looking at fast-running rivers
- An artist should stay for long periods of time looking at the horizon where the ocean and sky meet
- An artist should stay for long periods of time looking at the stars in the night sky

An artist’s conduct in relation to work:

- An artist should avoid going to the studio every day
- An artist should not treat his work schedule as a bank employee does
- An artist should explore life and work only when an idea comes to him in a dream or during the day as a vision that arises as a surprise
- An artist should not repeat himself
- An artist should not overproduce
- An artist should avoid his own art pollution
- An artist should avoid his own art pollution
- An artist should avoid his own art pollution

An artist’s possessions:

- Buddhist monks advise that it is best to have nine possessions in their life:
  1 robe for the summer
  1 robe for the winter
  1 pair of shoes
  1 begging bowl for food
  1 mosquito net
  1 prayer book
  1 umbrella
  1 mat to sleep on
  1 pair of glasses if needed
- An artist should decide for himself the minimum personal possessions he should have
- An artist should have more and more of less and less
- An artist should have more and more of less and less
- An artist should have more and more of less and less

A list of an artist’s friends:

- An artist should have friends who lift his spirit
- An artist should have friends who lift his spirit
- An artist should have friends who lift his spirit

A list of an artist’s enemies:

- Enemies are very important
- The Dalai Lama has said that it is easy to have compassion with friends but much more difficult to have compassion with enemies
- An artist has to learn to forgive
- An artist has to learn to forgive
- An artist has to learn to forgive

Different death scenarios:

- An artist has to be aware of his own mortality
- For an artist, it is not only important how he lives his life but also how he dies
- An artist should look at the symbols of his work for the signs of different death scenarios
- An artist should die consciously without fear
- An artist should die consciously without fear
- An artist should die consciously without fear

Different funeral scenarios:

- An artist should give instructions before the funeral so that everything is done the way he wants it
- The funeral is the artist’s last art piece before leaving
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