Theater Response 4 Aidan Chin

What parts of the film "The Artist is Present" speak most powerfully to you and why? How do they relate to your own experience of the world?

Answer with personal specifics and thoughtful reflection in approximately 300-400 words, while referencing some material from class.

There were a few points that I believed stood out higher than any other points in the film. The first one that really stood out to me was when someone asked Marina Abramovic if she was nervous before the first day of her 3-month long performance. The response they gave, I really related to it. She said something along the lines of; even if I’m not nervous, I’m nervous that I’m not nervous. During her performances, she seems so otherworldly and almost fictional with her dedication and focus on her art. Her saying this grounds her more as a person like me. Another thing that jumped out at me was when a commenter spoke about Marina. This person pointed out that with her, everything is performance. I thought this comment was interesting because it is 1-to-1 with what we discussed in class. Human nature is performance and Marina is the embodiment of performance. In a way she is more in touch with her humanity than anyone else. She is solely true to herself. A 3rd part of the movie that impacted me was when she thought about adding David Blaine to her show, having him hack her apart and an ambulance come and whisk her away. Then after some input, she rejected the idea. This was because that would be an illusion and go against all she had worked for. She explained it like this: acting is like a fake knife and ketchup blood, and performance is like a real knife and real blood. Performance is totally real and to fake, that is to go against the idea of performance. Just like how in class we said people weren’t true to themselves and put on a façade of performance. The true performance is them being totally honest with themselves and being truly individual. Finally, the last thing that truly stood out to me is how she described pain. She said that pain is just a state of mind, and performance is also a state of mind. I resonate with this sentiment because in the time I have been going to the gym, there will always be pain. But to perform under the pain is where the true reward is. Working to the brink of faliure gives such a satisfaction afterwards, it makes it all worth it. After watching the film, it was revealed to me that Marina Abramovic is a much more relatable character than I would have believed.