

## Tania Bruguera: Fearless to the point of Reckless

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Research



Self Sabotage

Cuban performance artist Tania Bruguera's art practice shows no boundaries in order to express controversial issues. Her pieces, centered around politics, personal freedoms, and the Cuban revolution provoke discomfort and debate, and often utilize an unknowing audience.



Crowd Control

Bruguera intends for her audience to be unknowing and to have a reaction as they would in real life to a particular event. She works in a way that people are unsuspecting of her work. Similarly to how Abramovic deals with her audience, like experimenting with human behaviours. Crowd control took place in the turbine hall of the Tate Modern in 2008, the audience were unaware of it as performance and that they were the performers. Mounted police performed crowd control techniques on the the visitors of the Tate without explanation. Bruguera wants her audience to experience dynamics of power and not just view something presented from a distance.

I want to know if there was any confrontation with the visitors of the Tate and how it would have been dealt with.

I first experienced a piece of Bruguera's work at the MOVE exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in 2010 entitled *Encounter* which was a dark room with a wall filled with blindingly bright lamps which came on and off after a couple of minutes, the room was very warm and there was the sound of heavy pacing footsteps heard from above and the occasional sound of a gun being reloaded. The sound was confusing, I questioned the presence of someone watching from above or just a sound recording. This was quite terrifying, as my eyes adjusted to the light I suddenly realised I was the one being watched by someone holding a gun, I was unwillingly the performer.

I like how Tania's performances look at ideology, power and social behaviour. Her intention to 'address the subtlety and seductiveness of power, and our own participation in its process.