

Columbia rape victim who carried a mattress around campus stages brutal BDSM performance that saw her tied up and BEATEN - to show 'how Trump's presidency is diminishing political art'

- Emma Sulkowicz, 24, earned widespread attention in 2014 when she carried a twin-size mattress around school
- The piece was meant to draw attention to how Columbia University handled allegations of rape
- Her latest piece of performance art, shown in New York City, saw her wearing a bikini and heels while a dominatrix insulted her
- The man, referred to as 'Master', also tied her up with rope, beat her with a belt, and left her bound for the audience to untie
- Emma claims the piece is about the diminished value of political art made in a time when the country is a 'sinking ship'

By [CARLY STERN FOR DAILYMAIL.COM](#)

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The former Columbia University student who famously carried a mattress around campus to draw attention to her alleged rape is back with yet another piece of provocative performance art.

On the surface, Emma Sulkowicz's latest art project has a lot more to do with sex as opposed to politics than her previous one; in the middle of an art gallery, the 24-year-old was tied up with rope while wearing just a bikini, then beaten with a belt by a man she called 'Master'.

But according to Emma, the play-acting S&M, however overtly sexual it might have appeared, was just a metaphor — for the inability of art to flourish under the Trump administration.



Shocking: Emma Sulkowicz's latest piece of performance art features BDSM



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For several performance in New York, the 24-year-old was tied up and beaten in front of a crowd



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She said people were shocked by the performance, though a crowd gathered to watch



Emma let a professional dominatrix named Master Avery hurl abusive insults at her before physically abusing her



He tied her up and bound her to a beam of wood hanging from the ceiling

Emma first rose to national prominence in 2014 while she was a fourth-year student at Columbia.

At the time, she accused a fellow classmate of raping her in her dorm room, bringing the charges to the attention of the university. Two other women also brought formal complaints against the accused, but in hearings, the school found the male student to be 'not responsible'.

Emma was also part of a larger complaint filed later against the university, alleging that it had mishandled sexual assault cases.

To bring even more attention to her situation, she staged a piece of performance art called Mattress Performance (Carry That Weight), in which she carried a 50lbs twin-sized mattress — like the one she claims she was raped on — around campus.

Now, in her latest piece, she is only playing the victim.

Shown at the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts Project Space and documented by a reporter at [Broadly](#), the performance kicked off with a pink-haired Emma standing in her section of the gallery in heels and a coat.



So stranger to statements: Emma first earned attention in 2014 when she protested Columbia University's handling of her alleged rape by carrying a twin mattress around campus



© Katia Repina

This performance was more explicitly sexual, starring Emma in heels and a revealing bikini



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A reporter observing the performance said the ropes tied around her very clearly cut into her skin



Emma claims the piece is about the value of art in a country that's a 'sinking ship'



She said she questioned the importance or effectiveness of political art in a climate that diminishes it

Soon, the coat came off, revealing a skimpy bikini. An older bearded man, whom she called Master Avery — a professional dominatrix whom Emma considers a close friend — then approached her.

He slung insults at her, telling her that her 'boobs were too small' and her posture was bad. He then got physical, using a rope to tie knots around her legs and waist.

He tied her to a wooden beam which was strung up to the ceiling, so Emma hung, bound and immobile, above the ground. He then began hitting her with a belt.

In a subsequent performance, with more 'intense' beatings, the male dominatrix even invited the crowd to participate. Only one man took him up on the offer,

slapping Emma's face.

Though most of the audience was 'shocked', according to Emma, just one person was concerned enough to intervene, walking up to the young woman and asking her outright if she wished to be taken down.



She said: 'We're acting out this sadistic-masochistic relationship between the institution with all of its financial power, and this program [art] that wants to be political but can't be really because it's being tied up by this institution'



She added that the performance was 'a statement about the impotence of artwork during our given circumstances'



At the end of the performance, Emma was left tied up, so the audience had to take it upon themselves to untie her

Student carries bed to class in protest against alleged rapist





In 2014, she carried a mattress - like the one she said she was raped on - around school



She accused a fellow classmate of rape (as did two other students), but the school ruled that he was not responsible

At the end of the performance, which ran several times, Master Avery walked away and left the audience to untie Emma from the beam.

Although perhaps not immediately apparent from the brutalities of the performance, Emma claims her project is meant to make people think about the value of art in the 'sinking ship' that is the US right now, insisting that it makes 'a statement about the impotence of artwork during our given circumstances'.

'If our country is falling to pieces and you have artists running around saying they're political artists, but really their art is hanging on a sinking ship, the ship is still sinking,' she said.

'I was thinking a lot about this — is it really possible for political artists to make work that makes the ship stop from sinking?'

She went on: 'We're acting out this sadistic-masochistic relationship between the institution with all of its financial power, and this program [art] that wants to be political but can't be really because it's being tied up by this institution.'



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[GhostOfScholesy18](#), Manchester, United Kingdom, a day ago



Im this is art, im a potatoe

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WYgirl, Gillette, United States, a day ago

Ridiculous

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nousename, west tenn, United States, a day ago

What the hell is wrong with you people?

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nousename, west tenn, United States, a day ago

Really why?

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Grainofsalt, Chattanooga, United States, a day ago

I cant be too hard on her a r.a.p.e screws you up pretty good. i hope she finds peace.

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JSexton, Stamford, United States, a day ago

I could take a dump in the middle of MoMA and call it any type of art I please...as long as i take myself way too seriously, rail against anyone with differing views and maintain a smug attitude. In fact, this comment is art. Because I say so. Team Jen.

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GumballKing, Beverly Hills, United States, a day ago

LOVE EMMA'S ART. Keep up the good work. Creating controversial, shameless, thought provoking art. My favorite was your g/rape recreation. It was brilliant and thought provoking. The trolls commenting pushed it to the next level It didn't get the coverage worthy of the brilliance of the production.

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pygar2000, seattle, United States, a day ago

I wonder if she would find her perfect match on eHarmony or Match.com

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Don Wilson, Tucson, a day ago

If the country truly is a sinking ship, it's due to this kind of crap.

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BW, Los Angeles, United States, a day ago

I pity the poor sod that gets tangled in that web of crazy

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