

LISSON

AI WEIWEI



BIOGRAPHY

A global citizen, artist and thinker, Ai Weiwei moves between modes of production and investigation, subject to the direction and outcome of his research, whether into the Chinese earthquake of 2008 (for works such as *Straight*, 2008-12 and *Remembering*, 2009) or the worldwide plight of refugees and forced migrants (for *Law of the Journey* and his feature-length documentary, *Human Flow*, both 2017). From early iconoclastic positions in regards to authority and history, which included *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn* and a series of middle-finger salutes to sites of power, *Study of Perspective* (both 1995), Ai's production expanded to encompass architecture, public art and performance. Beyond concerns of form or protest, Ai now measures our existence in relation to economic, political, natural and social forces, uniting craftsmanship with conceptual creativity. Universal symbols of humanity and community, such as bicycles, flowers and trees, as well as the perennial problems of borders and conflicts are given renewed potency through installations, sculptures, films and photographs, while Ai continues to speak out publicly on issues he believes important. He is one of the leading cultural figures of his generation and serves as an example for free expression both in China and internationally.

Ai Weiwei was born in 1957 in Beijing and now lives and works in Portugal. He attended Beijing Film Academy and later, on moving to New York (1983–1993), continued his studies at the Parsons School of Design. Major solo exhibitions include Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, USA (2025); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (MUSAC) León, Spain (2025); Ordrupgaard Museum, Denmark (2024); MUSAC, León, Spain (2024); Kunsthal Rotterdam, Netherlands (2023); Pilane

Sculpture Park, Sweden (2023); the Design Museum, London, UK (2023); Albertina Modern, Vienna, Austria (2022); Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, UK (2022); National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Korea (MMCA), Seoul, Korea (2021); Serralves Foundation, Porto, Portugal (2021); Corodoaria Nacional, Lisbon, Portugal (2021); K20/K21, Düsseldorf, Germany (2019); OCA, São Paulo, Brazil (2018); Corpartes, Santiago, Chile (2018); Mucem, Marseille, France (2018); PROA, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2017); Sakip Sabanci, Museum, Istanbul, Turkey (2017); Public Art Fund, New York, NY, USA (2017); Israel Museum, Jerusalem (2017); Palazzo Strozzi, Florence, Italy (2016); 21er Haus, Vienna, Austria (2016); Helsinki Art Museum, Finland (2016); Royal Academy, London, UK (2015); Martin Gropius Bau, Berlin, Germany (2014); Indianapolis Museum of Art, IN, USA (2013); Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C., USA (2012); Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taiwan (2011); Tate Modern, London, UK (2010) and Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany (2009). Architectural collaborations include the 2012 Serpentine Pavilion and the 2008 Beijing Olympic Stadium, with Herzog and de Meuron. Among numerous awards and honours, he won the lifetime achievement award from the Chinese Contemporary Art Awards in 2008 and was made Honorary Academician at the Royal Academy of Arts, London in 2011. His human rights work has been recognised through the Václav Havel Prize for Creative Dissent in 2012 and Amnesty International's Ambassador of Conscience Award in 2015.