

Tang Contemporary Art presents:

Ai Weiwei "Refutation"

Artist: Ai Weiwei

Curator: Cui Cancan

Exhibition Dates: March 26 – April 30, 2018

Location: 10/F, H Queen's, 80 Queen's Road Central, Central, Hong Kong

Opening Reception: Monday, March 26, 6 – 8 pm

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (HONG KONG – March 8, 2018):

Tang Contemporary Art is proud to announce "Refutation," Ai Weiwei's second solo exhibition from March 26 to April 30, 2018 at the gallery's new space in H Queen's. Curated by Cui Cancan, this exhibition will be Ai's third collaboration with Tang Contemporary Art after "Ai Weiwei" in Beijing (2015) and "Wooden Ball" in Hong Kong (2015).

In July 2015, after receiving his passport back from Chinese authorities, Ai relocated to Berlin, Germany. In December 2015, Ai traveled with his son and girlfriend to the Greek island of Lesbos where he first encountered refugees face-to-face. He watched as boats carrying refugees began arriving on shore. He recorded video with his phone as the refugees, including the very young and the very old, climbed out of the simple inflatable boat. This event sparked his later actions, which are a direct response to the largest refugee crisis in human history. Since then, his team has shot nearly 1,000 hours of footage in 40 refugee camps across 23 countries. In 2017, Ai Weiwei presented the installation *Law of the Journey*, a black inflatable boat 60 meters long and 3 meters wide carrying 258 humanoid figures, at the National Gallery in Prague.



Law of the Journey (Prototype A), 1640 x 580 x 350 cm, reinforced PVC, 2016

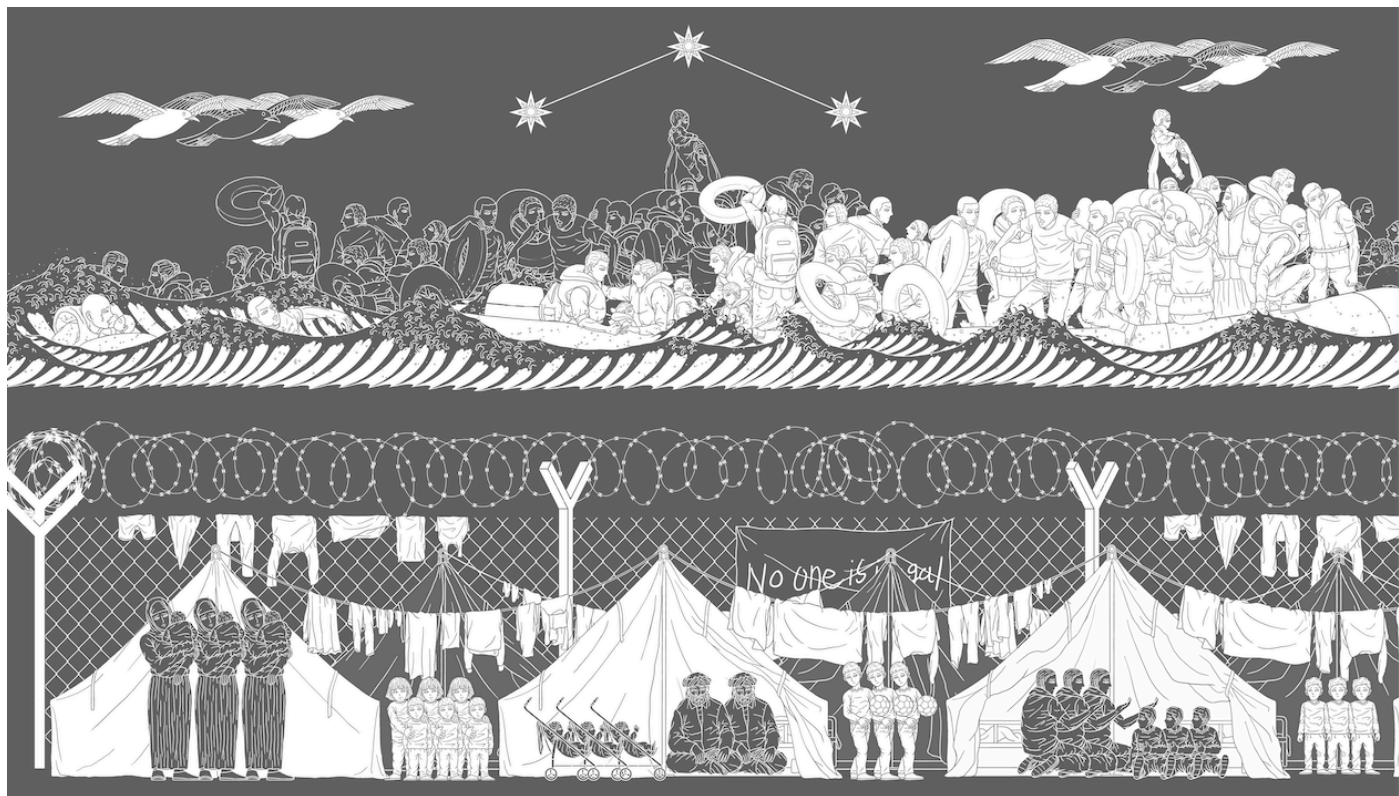
行之道（模型 A），1640 x 580 x 350，強化 PVC，2016

From a cellar in Xinjiang to an underground studio on New York's 7th Street to his present underground studio in Berlin, Ai Weiwei has been a refugee who has not stopped moving. Various political and regional restrictions have meant that he could neither hide nor escape. It is precisely this personal experience and background that gives him a sincere and close

emotional relationship with the 65 million refugees globally. He deeply identifies with those who, like him, were pushed toward extreme misfortune by unstoppable external forces.

In March 2018, this black Noah's Ark full of refugees will stop in Hong Kong when Ai Weiwei's solo exhibition "Refutation" opens in this once-free port. Here, Hong Kong's hundred-year colonial history and Ai's long "underground life" have a wonderful consonance. This city and its current conflicts give this refugee ship a distinctive meaning.

Refugees are the core subject of this exhibition. Over the last two years, whether at "Maybe, Maybe Not" at the Israel Museum, at "Good Fences Make Good Neighbors" in New York City, or in his documentary feature "Human Flow", Ai has built new exhibition structures to continue his repeated emphasis on the global refugee condition, examining the issue from a range of perspectives.



奧德賽（細節），牆紙，2016
Odyssey (details), wallpaper, 2016

At Tang Contemporary Art Hong Kong, journeys are a key theme in the exhibition space. The wallpaper on the walls of the gallery is an important element of the show. *Odyssey* draws from ancient Greece, but is closely related to the present reality of Syrian refugees; Ai used black and white images and simple lines, weaving myth, history, and reality. He presents flight from a war zone, ruined cities, sea journeys, life in purgatorial refugee camps, and various types of violence faced in Europe. *Stacked Porcelain Vases as a Pillar* moves these stories to another medium. This columnar installation is comprised of a set of six stacked blue and white Yuan-style vases painted with refugees' stories. The hand-drawn content is similar to that of *Odyssey*, depicting war, ruins, flight, ocean crossings, refugee camps, and conflict. He cleverly brings together dislocations in time and space, layering and re-situating tradition and reality to give them both new meaning. In this stacked porcelain installation, the six stories come from decidedly different realities, standing as metaphors for their respective times and places.

Another work in the show is *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn*. Ai used Legos to create a series of portraits of over a hundred political prisoners from around the world. *Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn* could be seen as an extension of that installation. The original set of photographs was taken in 1995, as part of a series of images of Ai dropping the Han dynasty vessel.

In this refutation, what power has caused Hong Kong's present identification and anxiety about identity? In *Dragon Vase*, Ai Weiwei gives a potential answer: an imitation red dragon vase, akin to those made during the Xuande period of the Ming dynasty. An original vase produced by the imperial kiln would be adorned with a five-clawed dragon, but Ai has used a six-clawed dragon. Since ancient times, the dragon has been a symbol of the Chinese emperor and absolute centralized power. During the Ming dynasty, the court forbade the use of the dragon among the common people, and formulated rules regarding the designs on official court dress, more often than not overstepping its authority.



“Wooden Ball”, Tang Contemporary Art, Hong Kong, 2015
《木質球》，當代唐人藝術中心，香港，2015

Can the control of those in power stop the human desire for freedom? In a recent article in *The Guardian*, Ai Weiwei refuted this point, “In nature there are two approaches to dealing with flooding. One is to build a dam to stop the flow. The other is to find the right path to allow the flow to continue. Building a dam does not address the source of the flow – it would need to be built higher and higher, eventually holding back a massive volume. If a powerful flood were to occur, it could wipe out everything in its path. The nature of water is to flow. Human nature too seeks freedom and that human desire is stronger than any natural force.”

On April 3, 2011, Ai Weiwei was arrested as he was boarding a flight from Beijing to Hong Kong. He would spend 81 days under secret detention before being released. In 2015, Ai's passport was returned to him and his freedom to travel was restored.

Artist will be available for email interviews. Please contact us in advance for scheduling.

ABOUT ARTIST

Ai Weiwei is renowned for making strong aesthetic statements that resonate with timely phenomena across today's geopolitical world. From architecture to installations, social media to documentaries, Ai uses a wide range of mediums as expressions of new ways for his audiences to examine society and its values. Recent exhibitions include: "Inoculation" at Fundacion Proa in Buenos Aires, "Good Fences Make Good Neighbors" with the Public Art Fund in New York City, "Ai Weiwei on Porcelain" at the Sakip Sabanci Museum in Istanbul, "Ai Weiwei: Trace at Hirshhorn" at the Hirshhorn Museum and "Sculpture Garden" in Washington D.C., "Maybe, Maybe Not" at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, "Law of the Journey" at the National Gallery in Prague, and "Ai Weiwei. Libero" at Palazzo Strozzi in Florence.

Ai was born in Beijing in 1957 and currently resides and works in Berlin. Ai is the current Einstein Visiting Professor at the Berlin University of the Arts (UdK), and he is the recipient of the 2015 Ambassador of Conscience Award from Amnesty International and the 2012 Václav Havel Prize for Creative Dissent from the Human Rights Foundation. Ai's first feature-length documentary Human Flow premiered at the 74th Venice Film Festival in competition.

ABOUT TANG CONTEMPORARY ART

Tang Contemporary Art was established in 1997 in Bangkok, later establishing galleries in Beijing and most recently Hong Kong. The gallery is fully committed to producing critical projects and exhibitions to promote Contemporary Chinese art regionally and worldwide, and encourage a dynamic exchange between Chinese artists and those abroad. Acting as one of the most progressive and critically driven exhibition spaces in China, the gallery strives to initiate dialogue between artists, curators, collectors and institutions working both locally and internationally. A roster of groundbreaking exhibitions has earned them international recognition, establishing their status as a pioneer of the contemporary art scene in Asia.

Tang Contemporary Art represents leading figures in Chinese art including Ai Weiwei, Huang Yong Ping, Shen Yuan, Wang Du, Liu Xiaodong, Yang Jiechang, Xia Xiaowan, Sun Yuan & Peng Yu, Yan Lei, Wang Yin, Wang Yuping, Yang Jiang Group, Guo Wei, Zheng Guogu, Michael Lin, Lin Yilin, H. H. Lim, He An, Zhao Zhao, Wang Yuyang, Weng Fen, Yang Yong, Xu Qu, Xu Xiaoguo, Ji Zhou, Cai Lei, Ling Jian and Chen Wenbo, additionally collaborating with international artists such as Rirkrit Tiravanija, Navin Rawanchaikul, Sakarin Krue-on, and Prasert Yodkaew.

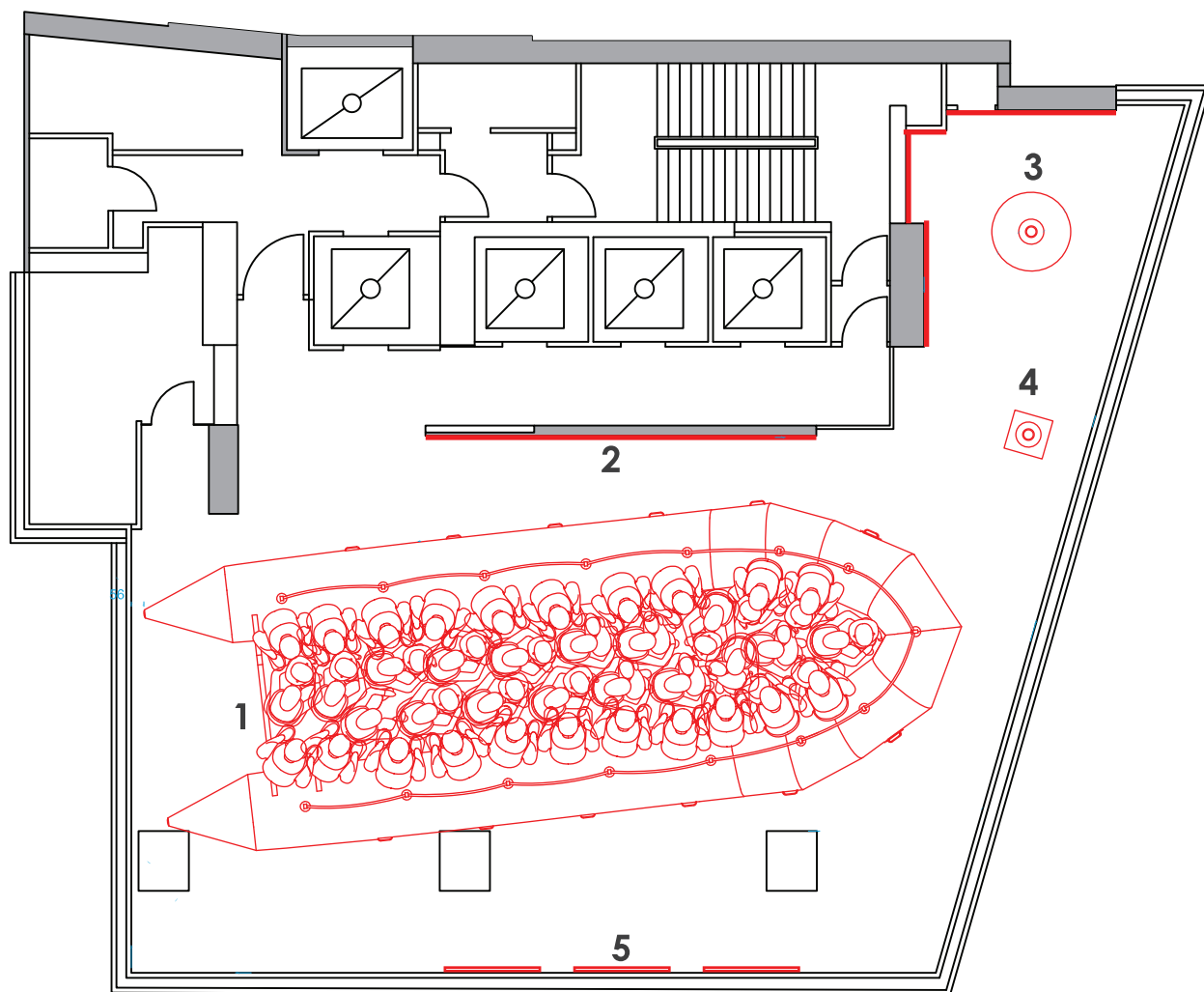
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Ai Weiwei - Refutation
艾未未 - 駁議

Curator: Cui Cancan
策展人: 崔灿灿

3.26 - 4.30, 2018



1 Law of the Journey (Prototype A)
行之道 (模型A)

強化PVC
Reinforced PVC

1640 x 580 x 350 cm
2016

2 Odyssey
奧德賽

牆紙
Wallpaper

2016

3 Stacked Porcelain Vases as a
Pillar
罐柱

瓷
Porcelain

312 x 51 x 27 cm
2017

4 Dragon Vase
龍紋罐

瓷
Porcelain

51 x 51 x 52 cm
2017

5 Dropping a Han Dynasty Urn
失手

樂高
LEGO bricks

230.4 x 192 x 3 cm
Triptych 一組三件
2015