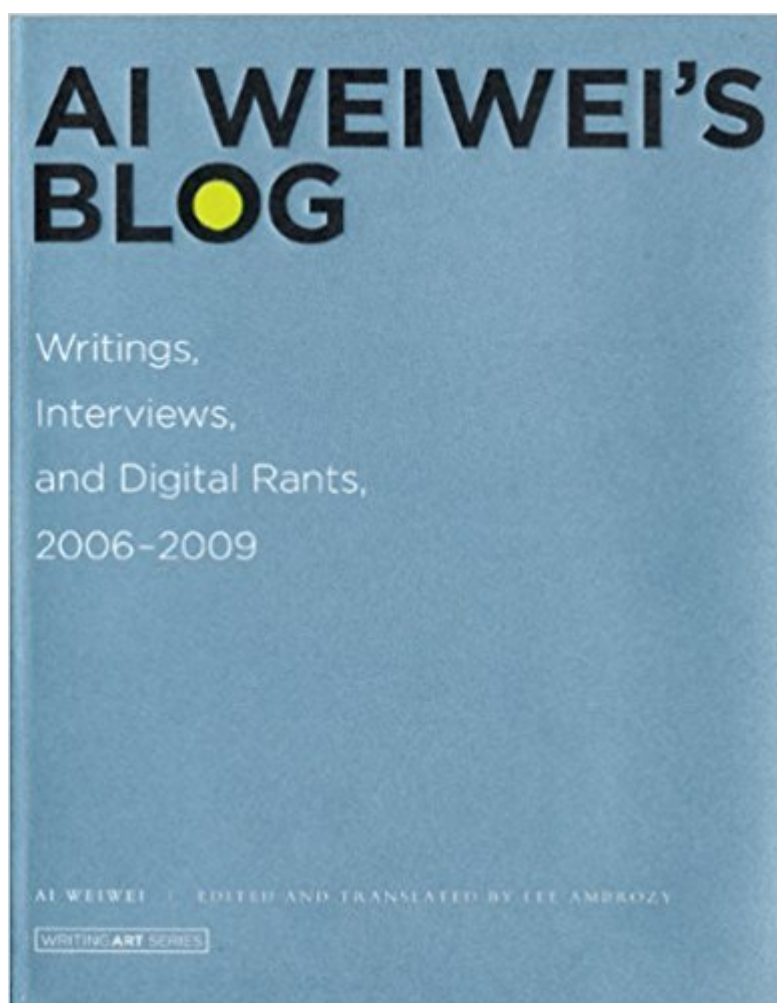




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Ai Weiwei's Blog: Writings, Interviews, And Digital Rants, 2006-2009 (Writing Art)



Synopsis

In 2006, even though he could barely type, China's most famous artist started blogging. For more than three years, Ai Weiwei turned out a steady stream of scathing social commentary, criticism of government policy, thoughts on art and architecture, and autobiographical writings. He wrote about the Sichuan earthquake (and posted a list of the schoolchildren who died because of the government's "tofu-dregs engineering"), reminisced about Andy Warhol and the East Village art scene, described the irony of being investigated for "fraud" by the Ministry of Public Security, made a modest proposal for tax collection. Then, on June 1, 2009, Chinese authorities shut down the blog. This book offers a collection of Ai's notorious online writings translated into English -- the most complete, public documentation of the original Chinese blog available in any language. The New York Times called Ai "a figure of Warholian celebrity." He is a leading figure on the international art scene, a regular in museums and biennials, but in China he is a manifold and controversial presence: artist, architect, curator, social critic, justice-seeker. He was a consultant on the design of the famous "Bird's Nest" stadium but called for an Olympic boycott; he received a Chinese Contemporary Art "lifetime achievement award" in 2008 but was beaten by the police in connection with his "citizen investigation" of earthquake casualties in 2009. Ai Weiwei's Blog documents Ai's passion, his genius, his hubris, his righteous anger, and his vision for China.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This work is invaluable as a critical perspective and chronicle while also being an extraordinary

contributor to...the contemporary Chinese political landscape. (David Roberts Building Design)In terms of illuminating the dynamics of protest in our understanding of one of global culture's most percipient commentators, this text is highly recommended. (Alex Ross THE)Ai Weiwei is a widely acclaimed artist, an innovative designer, an influential architect, a visionary urbanist, a competitive cook, and even a great hairdresser. He is also a compelling and disputatious writer who knows how to address and to rally a wide audience, voicing his own dissatisfaction, and that of his fellow countrymen, at being confronted on a daily basis with the alarming glibness of a rampant Chinese society and its disquieting political representation. (Chris Dercon, Director, Tate Modern) Blogging produces reality rather than simply representing it. Ai Weiwei is among our very best guides to this new terrain: one of the greatest living international artists and a fighter for more freedom. Ai Weiwei's daily blog entries, gathered here, will make the reader see the world in a different and startlingly original light. (Hans-Ulrich Obrist, Co-Director of Exhibitions and Programmes and Director of International Projects, Serpentine Gallery, London)The works and words of Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, who lived in New York during formative years of his artistic development, seem to arise not only from the venerable cultural traditions of his homeland but also from those commenced in colonial America with the 'Common Sense' political activism of Thomas Paine, further fused with the trickster antics of the Native American Coyote character and the lingering specter of Andy Warhol's media savvy. It remains to be seen what will become of this broadly transnational artist amidst the turbulent global culture of our time, but he is not easily ignored. (Jock Reynolds, Henry J. Heinz II Director, Yale University Art Gallery)

Ai Weiwei (b. 1957), artist, architect, activist, and outspoken social critic, is one of the most famous and controversial figures in China today. His work has been exhibited in Europe, Asia, Australia, and the United States, in venues ranging from the Venice Biennale to the Guangzhou Triennial. Lee Ambrozy is a translator and scholar of Chinese art history. Lee Ambrozy is the Editor of Artforum's Chinese language website.

My interest in his blog truly centers on his post 2008 earthquake entries. As usual for him, there were entries which held much depth and insight. For me, the one drawback was that it takes some time to give the book the attention it deserves and I am always short on time. Some of the things he says are incredibly insightful. Certainly I see China more truly than I had before. I cannot believe that the government would redo the fronts of the homes on a street so that they all looked alike. Incredible Worthwhile.

A VERY revealing and diverse mix of essays, reflections and observations by the Chinese artist who was arrested and is still being "detained" w/out outside contact. Good insights into the mental and physical state of "modern" China as well as topics such as architecture, contemporary artists and art, politics, etc.

Ai Wei Wei proves himself an very talented and powerful writer. His blogs are motivated by political rage but go far beyond it to involve the meaning of what it is to be human. Beautifully written and beautifully edited.

nice

The book arrived in perfect condition. New, clean and fast! The book itself is very interesting, but because the content is of a blog, thoughts are normally pretty disjointed between one blog post and another. Otherwise, great job!

Honest and informal discussions about art, politics, and society. This is a revealing look at a Chinese dissident with a world view. Get it.

Ai Weiwei's Blog is a collection of courageously honest rants. This book is also a sobering reminder of the price some pay for testing the boundaries of expression in a country that fears freedom. He has now disappeared and in doing so has become more than an important contemporary artist, (see the Phaidon monograph for a good survey.) His detention is emblematic of China's stumble toward the inevitable. We should all be paying close attention.

Sellout < Ai WeiWei. NoSellout > Ai WeiWei. NoSellout = Ai WeiWei. YesSellout + Ai WeiWei = money with no heart or soul.

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