

ART ADVISORY E-BULLETIN

September 2015
Edition 48

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Ai Weiwei at the Royal Academy

This September, the Royal Academy will launch the first major institutional survey Ai Weiwei's work ever held in the UK. The show, simply called *Ai Weiwei*, just like the Chinese artist himself, will bridge two decades of Weiwei's extraordinary career and exhibit a plethora of his major works as well as some new sculptures, as yet unseen by the British public.

Weiwei, who is an outspoken critic of the Chinese government, is famed for creating works which explore themes of creative and political freedom, such as his *Surveillance Camera* (2010), a marble replica of a CCTV camera or *Remembering*, (2009) an installation made from 9000 children's backpacks recalling the earthquake in Sichuan, which killed thousands of students and children.

Perhaps most anticipated, however, is Weiwei's monumental, site specific installation of trees in the Academy's historic courtyard made possible thanks to the museum's first ever Kickstarter campaign. Launched in order to raise the £100,000 necessary to transport and install the old trees, which began their life in the mountains of southern China, the campaign was a huge success raising more funds than was ever anticipated.

Much has happened in the life of the renowned Chinese artist Ai Weiwei since his breath-taking *Sunflower Seeds* – an installation of 100 million hand-crafted porcelain seeds – covered the floors of the Turbine Hall in the Tate Modern in 2010. Not only was he detained for 81 days without charge by the Chinese authorities over a contested tax bill, but he has also been unable to travel for the last four years. But in July this year, he was finally handed back his passport, enabling him to come to London for the opening of his seminal show.

Viola Raikhel-Bolot of 1858 Ltd quoted Weiwei's show as the must-see event in a recent Huffington Post article called "London's Art Scene this Autumn: 10 Must-See Events and Exhibitions". She said, "These will be exceptional works in a deserved setting; there's a poetry behind his work, which is always truly mesmerizing."

Dismaland – Banksy's Bemusement Park

The British graffiti artist Banksy, who has amassed a cult following for his scenes of anti-authoritarian whimsy has used his critical, thought-provoking view of society and turned it into a temporary theme park.

According to Banksy, '*Dismaland*' in the British seaside town of Weston-super-Mare, is "a family theme park unsuitable for children". It's not an amusement park but rather a bemusement park. It is not a place for dreams or happy endings but rather a dystopia, hiding behind the ruined façade of the disused Tropicana lido and comes complete with a derelict fairy tale castle and grumpy-looking 'greeters' wearing Mickey Mouse ears and *Dismal* T-shirts.

Just like his graffiti pieces, which adorn walls from London to Gaza and include scenes such as two kissing policemen, or two Palestinian children playing beneath a trompe l'oeil of a paradise island, his theme park explores themes of the surreal, the subversive and the political.

Before entering into Banksy's world, visitors must walk through artist Bill Barminski's fake security check point, where bags are passed through cardboard X-ray machines and grumpy-looking fake policemen pat you down.

Banksy, who invited other artists including Jenny Holzer, Mike Ross, Jim Cauty and Damien Hirst to create work for the park, says Dismaland "offers an escape from mindless escapism".

Dismaland will be open through September, but tickets are selling out fast. www.dismaland.co.uk



It's not Venice but...

Two lesser-known Biennials are currently well on their way and running through September and October. Although the 13th Biennial of Lyon and the 14th edition of the Istanbul Biennial may not attract the crowds and fanfare of events such as Art Basel Miami or the Venice Biennale, they are certainly not to be snubbed at.

This year's Biennial in Istanbul titled *Saltwater: A Theory of Thought Forms* was put together by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, who curated Documenta 13 in 2012. It is showcasing all manner of serendipitous treasures, including Adrian Villar-Rojas piece *The Most Beautiful of all Mothers*, a series of life-size fibreglass creatures floating in the Sea of Marmara, Wael Shawky's *Cabaret Crusades* shown in the Küçük Mustafa Pa a Hammam and Francis [Alÿs](#)' beautiful black-and-white film *The Silence of Ani* – set in the ruins of the medieval town on the banks of the Akhurian river that separates eastern Turkey from Armenia.

Meanwhile for *La Vie Moderne*, the 13th Biennial in Lyon, guest curator Ralph Rugoff (Director of the Hayward Gallery) brings together artists from 28 different countries who explore the contradictory character of contemporary culture in varied regions of the world. Artists such as Jeremy Deller, Ed Ruscha and Yto Barrada are being exhibited in venues such as the Sucrière, formerly a warehouse and now the flagship venue for this event, and in the Lyon Museum of Contemporary Art.



Left : Adrian Villar-Rojas installation at Biennale of Istanbul 2015
Right : Biennale de Lyon

Hey, thanks kids!

Most parents walk through the museum behind their children, every now warning them: “Don’t touch” if they get too close to the art. But in two recent incidents where children knocked into precious pieces being exhibited, getting too close turned out to be a good thing...

In August, a seven-year old girl inadvertently knocked into a glass case housing an ancient Roman vase (oops) whilst visiting the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. Although the object, which was part of an exhibition of rare Egyptian, Roman and Byzantine objects from the Robert and Renee Belfer collection fell to the ground, it miraculously broke along a crack which had previously been repaired, leaving it in better condition than it had been before.

Meanwhile, in the very same week, a 12-year old boy visiting Huashan 1914 Creative Park in Taipei, tripped and punched a fist-sized hole into a Baroque masterpiece by Paolo Porpora valued at \$1.5m. Captured on CCTV, the unfortunate incident shows the teenager holding a soft drink and looking back at something before falling over the protective rope-line and onto the painting.

Since this unfortunate event, doubts have arisen as to whether the painting is indeed by Porpora, or actually a fake, as critics claim it looks identical to a painting by 17th century artist Mauro Nuzzi. Nice work kiddo.



Left : Roman-era vase from Robert and Renee Belfer collection at the Israel Museum.
Right: the Porpora painting and the damage caused by the young boy's hand.

And in other news...

- Ebay and Phillips announced a new partnership uniting the world's most vibrant online marketplace with the international auction house, which focuses on contemporary art and design. The first event, "New Now", a sale of collectible contemporary art was held on Sept 17 in New York and on line. <http://www.ebay.com/clt/collectibles-live-events/new-now-572647>
- This October, the Moniker Art Fair, which will be held in East London's Old Truman Brewery for the sixth time, will be the first international art fair to accept Bitcoin payments. Moniker is London's leading event for contemporary art rooted in urban culture. www.monikerartfair.com
- Los Angeles's much-anticipated contemporary art museum – The Broad – is set to finally open its doors towards the end of this month. Financed by the philanthropist Eli Broad and designed by architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro will, the museum will house the Eli Broad Foundation's art collection. www.thebroad.org
- Russia's only contemporary art fair *Cosmoscow*, which successfully re-launched last year, was taking place in Moscow 11-13 Sept this year. *Cosmoscow* aims to connect Russia's contemporary art scene with the international art community. It showcases artists previously unseen in the Russian market, as well as established artists and emerging artists from the region. [com](http://www.cosmoscow.com)



Impressions of Cosmoscow 2015

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How an 1858 advisor can help you:

- **Exclusive Access** to works of art in private collections that are not available on the market.
- **Impartial Advice** being independent of auction houses, galleries and dealers, we provide impartial advice when buying and selling on behalf of our client.
- **Time Savings** as we are able to manage all areas of the collecting process on our clients behalf, we are able to build or sell complete collections with as much or as little involvement from the client as they wish.
- **Direct Savings** due to our buying and negotiating capabilities we significantly reduce transactional charges which in turn we pass directly on to our client.
- **Reducing Risk** by undertaking thorough due diligence on all transactional decisions, we ensure that potentially costly mistakes are avoided and the client has complete confidence in the decision made.

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Art Calendar Highlights

Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts, Bruxelles/Le Louvre, Paris

Une Brève Histoire de l'Avenir

24.09.2015-04.01.2016

www.fine-arts-museum.be/en/exhibitions/2050

<http://www.louvre.fr/expositions/une-breve-histoire-de-l-avenir>

Ruhr Triennale

14.08 - 26.09.2015

<https://www.ruhrtriennale.de/en>

Royal Academy of Arts

Ai Weiwei

19.09. - 13.12.2015

www.royalacademy.org.uk/exhibition/ai-weiwei

UQ Art Museum

Light Play: Ideas, Optics, Atmosphere

15.08.-15.11.2015

<http://www.artmuseum.uq.edu.au/>

Frieze London

14.10 - 17.10.2015

<http://friezelondon.com/>



"Text by Anne-Céline Jaeger for 1858 Limited"

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