

# Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei

■ **1957:** Born in Beijing to parents once sent to labour camp due to his poet father's political leanings

■ **1981:** After studying at Beijing Film Academy, Ai moves to New York – begins to create conceptual art using ready made objects

■ **1993:** Returns to China – helps establish experimental artists' Beijing East Village

■ **1995:** Early work shows Ai shattering priceless ancient Chinese vase – destruction and recreation become recurring theme throughout much of his art

■ **2008:** Helps design Beijing "Bird's Nest" Olympic stadium, but later disowns Games as "fake smile" concealing China's problems

■ **2009:** Claims he was beaten by police for investigation into poor school construction leading to deaths of over 5,000 children in 2008 Sichuan earthquake

■ ***So Sorry*** exhibition in Munich represents empty excuses made by governments after disasters and injustices

■ **Nov 2010:** Placed under house arrest in Beijing to stop him holding party to celebrate forced demolition of Shanghai studio

■ **Feb-Apr 2011:** Keeps account of detentions in China in wake of uprisings in Arab world

■ **Apr 3:** Prevented from boarding flight to Hong Kong and detained by police



*Current installation **Sunflower Seeds** at Tate Modern gallery, London, consists of 100 million handmade sunflower seeds, with public invited to walk over work as a comment on mass consumerism*

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