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Ai Weiwei, born 1957 in Beijing, son of Ai Qing, a well known Chinese poet. Ai Weiwei is one of the most influential and well known Chinese artists, he is an active critic of the Chinese political system, who dares to talk and express his opinion as a liberally thinking individual within a restricted world. His work directly addresses the pressing problems of today's society, be it his installations, his photography, his reinterpretation of historical artefacts or his comments – what remains within us, is a stirring question.

I never see it as tradition how we normally talk about tradition. I see it as evidence of our activities from the past, very much like crime evidence. I often try to rework on it or rearrange the situation to imagine if the conditions were different the result will be changed. It's like a re-settlement of the crime site, which will totally change the story.

I think the foreign involvement with architecture in China did have some impact during the Olympic period but it will be soon limited to a minimal degree. Because this is still a nation of aesthetic discussion and no philosophical discussion on any kind of expressions or forms. So whatever you see is only the form rather than a kind of ideology and logic. I think whatever happens in China in the next decades doesn't have a real meaning by intention. There are no conscious aesthetic decisions but instead a phenomenon of a nation that can still develop into some kind of logic but without ideology, philosophy and a moral aesthetic basis.

I think culture, politics or life itself, it's always 3 different aspects of 1 thing: an individuals existence. How it relates to society, how it expresses itself, how it can be hurt or how it can be received by others. So I can not imagine these 3 can be separated. For me interaction is about how to react to the situation and how to deal with it. I don't have to plan it, it always comes out as long as you face the reality, try to cope with it, understand it and come out with some kind of conclusion, which survives this reality.

答案 = the answer  
Three responses by Ai Wei Wei. See our questions on the first page.

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