

FOR-SITE FOUNDATION *art about place*

BUILDING ON FOR-SITE'S 2014-15 EXHIBITION *@LARGE: AI WEIWEI ON ALCATRAZ, AI WEIWEI: YOURS TRULY* INSPIRES VIEWERS TO TAKE ACTION IN THE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Featuring artist Ai Weiwei, CIA whistleblower John Kiriakou, Nobel Peace Prize nominee Ahmed Maher, and activist and prisoner of conscience Chelsea Manning

Documentary to make its world premiere as a marquee presentation at the San Francisco Film Festival



San Francisco, CA (March 26, 2019) – *Ai Weiwei: Yours Truly*, the feature-length documentary film directed by FOR-SITE Foundation executive director Cheryl Haines, has its world premiere during the San Francisco International Film Festival 2019, on **Sunday, April 14th, 7:30pm at the Castro Theatre**. A Q&A with Ai Weiwei, John Kiriakou, and Cheryl Haines will follow the screening.

The film begins with FOR-SITE's remarkable exhibition *@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz* (2014-2015). Following Ai Weiwei's detention by the Chinese authorities, the outspoken artist and activist transformed the former island penitentiary with an exhibition that engaged nearly 900,000 visitors in a conversation about human rights and personal freedom. One of these

artworks, *Yours Truly*, invited the public to compose postcards to prisoners of conscience around the world. By the time the exhibition ended, over 90,000 postcards were sent.

In order to bring Ai Weiwei's call to action to new audiences, director Cheryl Haines began working on the feature-length documentary film. "This project has been so rewarding," says Haines. "It has allowed me to have more personal contact with some of the prisoners of conscience depicted in the *@Large* exhibition, to learn more about their lives, and to share with them the impact that they are having through their courageous acts."

The film follows the postcards from *@Large* around the globe—from Alcatraz Island to Beijing, Washington, D.C., and Cairo—as former prisoners of conscience and their families discuss their difficult choices and the comfort they took from personal postcards reminding them that they were not forgotten. Ultimately, *Ai Weiwei: Yours Truly* is a call to action, extending the reach of Ai Weiwei's art and encouraging viewers to participate in the struggle for global human rights.

Featured Interviews

Ai Weiwei

Ai Weiwei is among the world's most celebrated contemporary artists and an outspoken critic of injustice, both in China and abroad.

The family of Ebrahim Sharif Al Sayed

Bahraini Ebrahim Sharif is former Secretary-General of the now-disbanded National Democratic Action Society, a political opposition group advocating for governmental reform. Sharif was charged with "incitement to overthrow the regime" and imprisoned from March 2011 to June 2015. Sharif's wife and children visited the exhibition on Alcatraz and sat for interviews about the personal impact of Sharif's incarceration.

Ahmed Maher

Activist and civil engineer Ahmed Maher is a cofounder of Egypt's April 6 Youth Movement. In 2011, Maher was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize for his work toward democratic reform.

Chelsea Manning

While a U.S. Army intelligence analyst, Manning (then Bradley Manning) delivered hundreds of thousands of classified documents that pointed to war crimes committed by the United States military to WikiLeaks in 2010.

John Kiriakou

A former CIA officer, Kiriakou was imprisoned for revealing information about the U.S. intelligence community's use of torture.

Gao Ying

Gao Ying is the wife of famed poet Ai Qing and mother of artist Ai Weiwei. When her husband was persecuted for being a Rightist, she and her children, including then one-year-old Ai Weiwei, were exiled to the Chinese hinterlands for twenty-one years.

About the FOR-SITE Foundation: Established in 2003 by curator Cheryl Haines, the FOR-SITE Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the creation, understanding, and presentation of art about place. Recent projects encompass commissions, artist residencies, and educational programs, and include the acclaimed exhibitions *Sanctuary* (2017); *Home Land Security* (2016); *@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz* (2014); *International Orange* (2012); *Presidio Habitats* (2010); and a series of land-art installations by Andy Goldsworthy currently on view in the Presidio. Visit for-site.org for more information.

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Notes to Editors:

Ai Weiwei: Yours Truly SFIFF screening date: Sunday, April 14, 2019 at 7:30pm

Location: Castro Theater (429 Castro Street, San Francisco, CA 94114)

More information: <https://sffilm.org/event/ai-weiwei-yours-truly/>

Social Media:

Facebook: @yourstrulydoc

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