

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Glastonbury Festival, Pilton, Somerset, England, 2022

*Opening Night Film, United Nations Association Film Festival, 2019

*Official selection, Premier Opening Night, San Francisco International Film Festival, 2019

*Official selection, International Premier Opening Night Film, Arte Cinema, Napoli, Italy, 2019

AI WEIWEI: YOURS TRULY

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



San Francisco, CA (September 8, 2023) – *Ai Weiwei: Yours Truly*, the feature-length documentary film directed by FOR-SITE Executive Director Cheryl Haines, will have its final San Francisco screening at Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture’s (FMCAC) Cowell Theater on September 20 at 7:30 p.m., with an introduction by Cheryl Haines. Presented by FOR-SITE in partnership with Haines Gallery and FMCAC, the screening is part of the Fort Mason Art Walk and follows the opening reception of Haines Gallery’s new exhibition *Sacred and Profane Geometries*, featuring works by Ai Weiwei and Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian.

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 had been 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 Bahrain, 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 FOR-SITE

Established in 2003 by Founding Executive Director Cheryl Haines, FOR-SITE is dedicated to the creation, presentation, and understanding of art about place. Highly acclaimed, major FOR-SITE projects include: *Lands End* at the former Cliff House (2022-2023), *Sanctuary* (2017-2018); *Home Land Security* (2016); *@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz* (2014-2015); *International Orange* (2012), a group show honoring the 75th anniversary of the Golden Gate Bridge; and land-art installations by Andy Goldsworthy currently on view in the Presidio, including *Spire* (2008) and *Wood Line* (2011).

ABOUT HAINES GALLERY

Founded by Cheryl Haines in 1987 on the belief that contemporary art can change the conversation and transform the culture, Haines Gallery is a vital West Coast platform for celebrated and ambitious artists from around the globe. The gallery's program aims to engage and inspire collectors, curators, and diverse audiences with artistic statements that are visually compelling and conceptually rigorous.

ABOUT FORT MASON CENTER FOR ARTS & CULTURE (FMCAC)

A decommissioned military installation converted into a nonprofit cultural center, FMCAC hosts a lively mix of arts, educational, and cultural programming. Each year FMCAC provides more than \$2 million in support to local arts organizations, enabling groups to produce diverse and innovative artworks at the historic waterfront campus. With a four-decade history as an arts and culture destination, FMCAC is now focused on reinvigorating its programming and amenities to better engage the evolving Bay Area creative community. Central to this new vision is the

commissioning and presentation of adventurous and unconventional artworks best realized in nontraditional or historical settings.

FOR CALENDAR LISTINGS

Date: Wednesday, September 20, 2023

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Location: Cowell Theater, Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture, 2 Marina Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94123

Admission: Free; registration required

Information: for-site.org

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook: facebook.com/forsitefoundation

Twitter: [@for-site](https://twitter.com/for-site)

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MEDIA CONTACT

Florie Hutchinson

florie.hutchinson@gmail.com

415.515.4696