

# Art Review:



## 13. AI WEIWEI

Category: Artist

Nationality: Chinese

Last Year: 43

Despite a recent survey by ArtTactic predictably naming Ai Weiwei as the Chinese artist with the likeliest market longevity, the spotlight this year has centered on his activist work, which is reanimating the relationship between artist and audience. Ai remains a thorn in the side of the Chinese authorities. Having alerted the world to his brutal assault at the hands of the police via Twitter last year, the artist suffered a similar run-in in August. These attacks seem only to have galvanised Ai, who in March gave a rare lecture in the US on the subject of censorship and installed a monument to the victims of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake on an Austrian mountainside, an act that must be viewed in light of the artist's ongoing efforts to investigate and publicise the possibility that poor construction standards increased the earthquake's death toll. Whether this commendable political bent will continue in Ai's Tate Turbine Hall commission (opening as we go to press) remains to be seen, while another question hangs over his seeming ubiquity on the gallery circuit: can he maintain viewers' interest, or is he in danger of overexposure?