

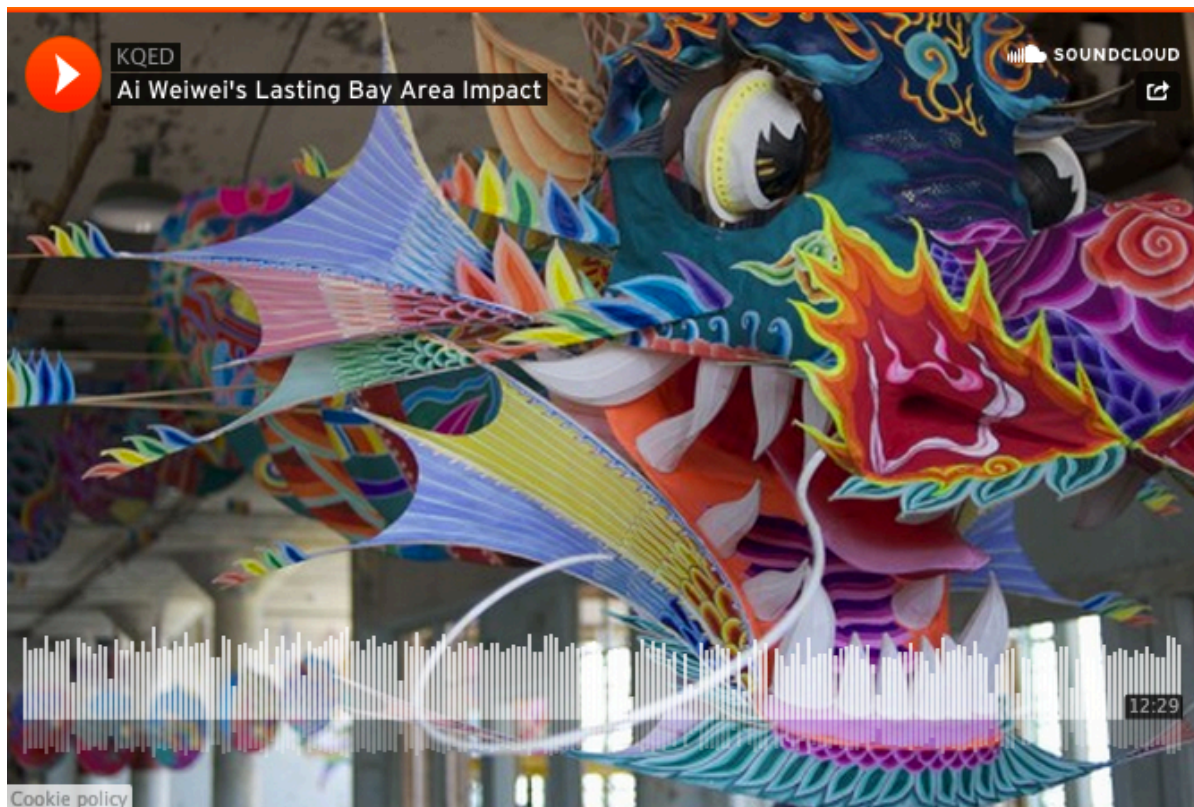
What Ai Weiwei's New Passport Means for the Artist's Career

By David Katayama
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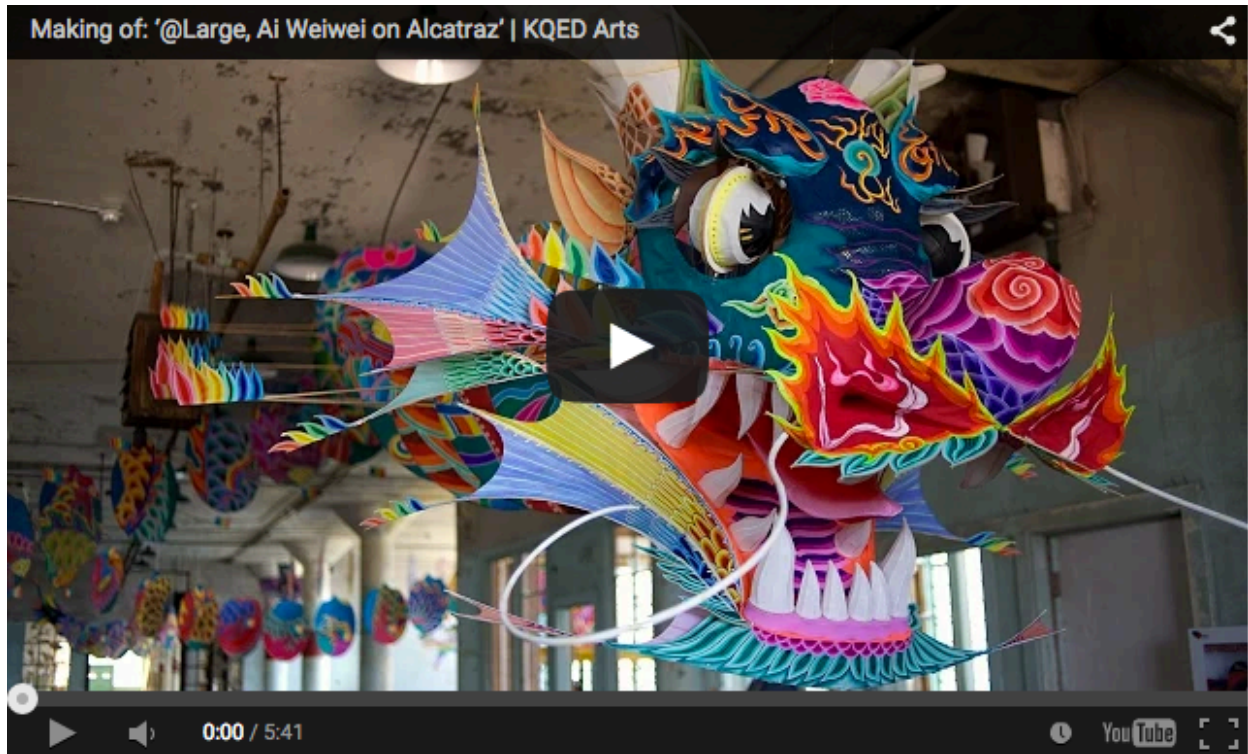
After being jailed by the Chinese government in 2011, and his work censored in the country, the dissident artist Ai Weiwei received [his passport back](#) this week.

“My heart is at peace,” the artist said in an [interview with CNN](#). “I feel quite released.”

Although unable to travel abroad, Ai, who is known for contemporary art that asserts free speech and human rights, still managed to mount a major exhibition in San Francisco without ever setting foot in the city. [@Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz](#) was curated by Cheryl Haines, founder of the For-Site Foundation located in San Francisco, and a friend of Ai. Haines spoke with KQED about her remote collaboration with the artist on [@Large](#) and the significance of Ai's ability to travel freely again.



Alcatraz saw nearly 900,000 visitors, many of them Bay Area residents, during the exhibition's run from Sep. 27, 2014 to Apr. 26, 2015, Haines said.



In one of the show's installations, *Yours Truly*, visitors could send postcards addressed to dissidents in 30 nations, Haines said.

"Some of the individuals, particularly the children, I found, sent the most beautiful messages. Some of them very simple. Others way more emotionally complex and mature than their years might suggest," she said.

Haines remembers one response from a "very serious" looking six-year-old. When the boy left, she picked up his card and read it.

"Dear Prisoner, I don't know what your day is like," Haines said, reciting the words on the card. "I'm not even sure what you did. But I'm very sorry and I hope that you get out soon. And if you don't, please try to find some joy, some happiness everyday."

Haines said she is working on a documentary called *Yours Truly*.