

PRESS RELEASE

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SAM's ASIAN ART MUSEUM TO COLLECT LEGOS IN SUPPORT OF CHINESE ARTIST AI WEIWEI

Donate your LEGOS for art at our official collection point—a secondhand BMW parked in front of the museum



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SEATTLE, WA - SAM's Asian Art Museum has become an official LEGO collection point in support of noted Chinese contemporary artist Ai Weiwei. This site-specific project is inspired by the LEGO company's refusal to sell Weiwei a bulk order of the tiny toy bricks because of concerns about the political nature of his work.

Ai Weiwei posted about the refusal on Instagram and his post triggered a flood of responses on social media criticizing LEGO for censorship. Thousands of supporters offered to donate LEGOs to the artist, so Weiwei organized formal collection points with major museums around the world: a series of parked cars where participants can drop LEGO donations through the sunroof.

The car will be open and accepting donations rain or shine through January 10, 2016 during Asian Art Museum open hours, which are:

Monday and Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	10 am - 5 pm
Thursday	10 am - 9 pm
Friday-Sunday	10 am - 5 pm

In addition, please note the Asian Art Museum's holiday hours:

Thursday December 24 (Christmas Eve)	10 am-3 pm
Friday December 25 (Christmas Day)	Closed
Thursday December 31 (New Year's Eve)	10 am-9 pm (regular hours)
Friday January 1 (New Year's Day)	Closed

Share a pic of your donation or support and use the hashtag #legosforweiwei.





Colored Vases, a 2010 work by Ai Weiwei that slyly plays on the question of authenticity, is currently on view at the Asian Art Museum. Also on view through March 13, 2016 is the special exhibition *Paradox of Place: Contemporary Korean Art*, which features six leading-edge Korean artists whose works address paradoxes in Korean art and society.

We will also be accepting LEGO donations via mail. Postal donations can be sent to the Asian Art Museum, 1400 East Prospect Street, Seattle, WA, 98112.

Photo credits: Natali Wiseman. Natali Wiseman. **Image credit:** *Single Panel Portrait of Ai Weiwei*, 2014. Plastic LEGO®, 15 x 15 in. Image courtesy FOR-SITE Foundation. **Photo credit:** *Colored Vases*, 2010, Ai Weiwei, Chinese, b. 1957, ceramic with industrial paint, dimensions variable; (approx. 17 x 22 in. each), Seattle Art Museum, Purchased with funds from the Estate of Robert M. Shields, 2013.33. © Ai Weiwei, Photo by Nathaniel Willson.

ABOUT SEATTLE ART MUSEUM

As the leading visual art institution in the Pacific Northwest, SAM draws on its global collections, powerful exhibitions, and dynamic programs to provide unique educational resources benefiting the Seattle region, the Pacific Northwest, and beyond. SAM was founded in 1933 with a focus on Asian art. By the late 1980s the museum had outgrown its original home, and in 1991 a new 155,000-square-foot downtown building, designed by Robert Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates, opened to the public. The 1933 building was renovated and reopened as the Asian Art Museum. SAM's desire to further serve its community was realized in 2007 with the opening of two stunning new facilities: the nine-acre Olympic Sculpture Park (designed by Weiss/Manfredi Architects)—a "museum without walls," free and open to all—and the Allied Works Architecture designed 118,000-square-foot expansion of its main, downtown location, including 232,000 square feet of additional space built for future expansion.

From a strong foundation of Asian art to noteworthy collections of African and Oceanic art, Northwest Coast Native American art, European and American art, and modern and contemporary art, the strength of SAM's collection of more than 25,000 objects lies in its diversity of media, cultures and time periods.