



# Ai Weiwei: Life, Revolt & Poetry

**John Tancock**

**Chris Dercon**

**Contributions by Edouard Derom**

**Contributions by Lieven Van Den Abeele**

**Contributions by Rik Hemmerijckx**

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- A powerful homage by Ai Weiwei to his father
- Ai Weiwei pays tribute to two poets who shaped a remarkable cultural bridge: his father, the Chinese poet Ai Qing, and the Belgian poet Emile Verhaeren
- A moving history that connects poetry, memory, and artistic heritage across cultures
- Published to accompany the exhibition at the Emile Verhaeren Museum in Puurs-Sint-Amands from September 20 onwards
- At the same time, a parallel exhibition featuring works by Ai Weiwei will be presented at Galerie Patrick Derom in Brussels, Belgium

In this unique project, **Ai Weiwei** pays tribute to two poets who shaped a remarkable cultural bridge: his father, the Chinese poet **Ai Qing**, and the Belgian poet **Émile Verhaeren**. Ai Qing was the first to translate Verhaeren's poetry into Chinese, introducing the Belgian writer to readers in China. Out of deep admiration for his father's legacy, **Ai Weiwei** accepted the invitation to create an exhibition and catalogue exploring the bond between these two literary figures. This book is a moving homage that connects poetry, memory, and artistic heritage across cultures.

With text contributions by **John Tancock, Chris Dercon, Edouard Derom, Lieven Van Den Abeele and Rik Hemmerijckx**.

**John Tancock** is an art historian and coauthor of *Ai Weiwei: New York 1983-1993*. **Chris Dercon** is an art historian, curator and museum director. He was born in Lier, Belgium, in 1958. He studied Art History and Theatre Studies at the Rijksuniversiteit Leiden, and Film Studies at the Vrije Universiteit in Amsterdam. Chris Dercon has worked as a teacher, critic and journalist. He has been managing cultural institutions since 1988. He began his career as program director of PS1 New York in 1988, and in Rotterdam from 1990 to 1995 he directed the Witte de With (Melly Kunsinstituut), then the Boijmans van Beuningen from 1996 to 2002. From 2003 to 2011, he directed the Haus der Kunst in Munich. From 2011 to 2016, he directed the Tate Modern in London. From 2017 to 2018, he directed the Volksbühne Theater in Berlin. From 2019 to 2023, he is Chairman of the Réunion des Musées Nationaux and the Grand Palais. Since June 2023, he has been Director of the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain.

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