

Ai Weiwei Plans Three Los Angeles Exhibitions This Fall

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By Jori Finkel

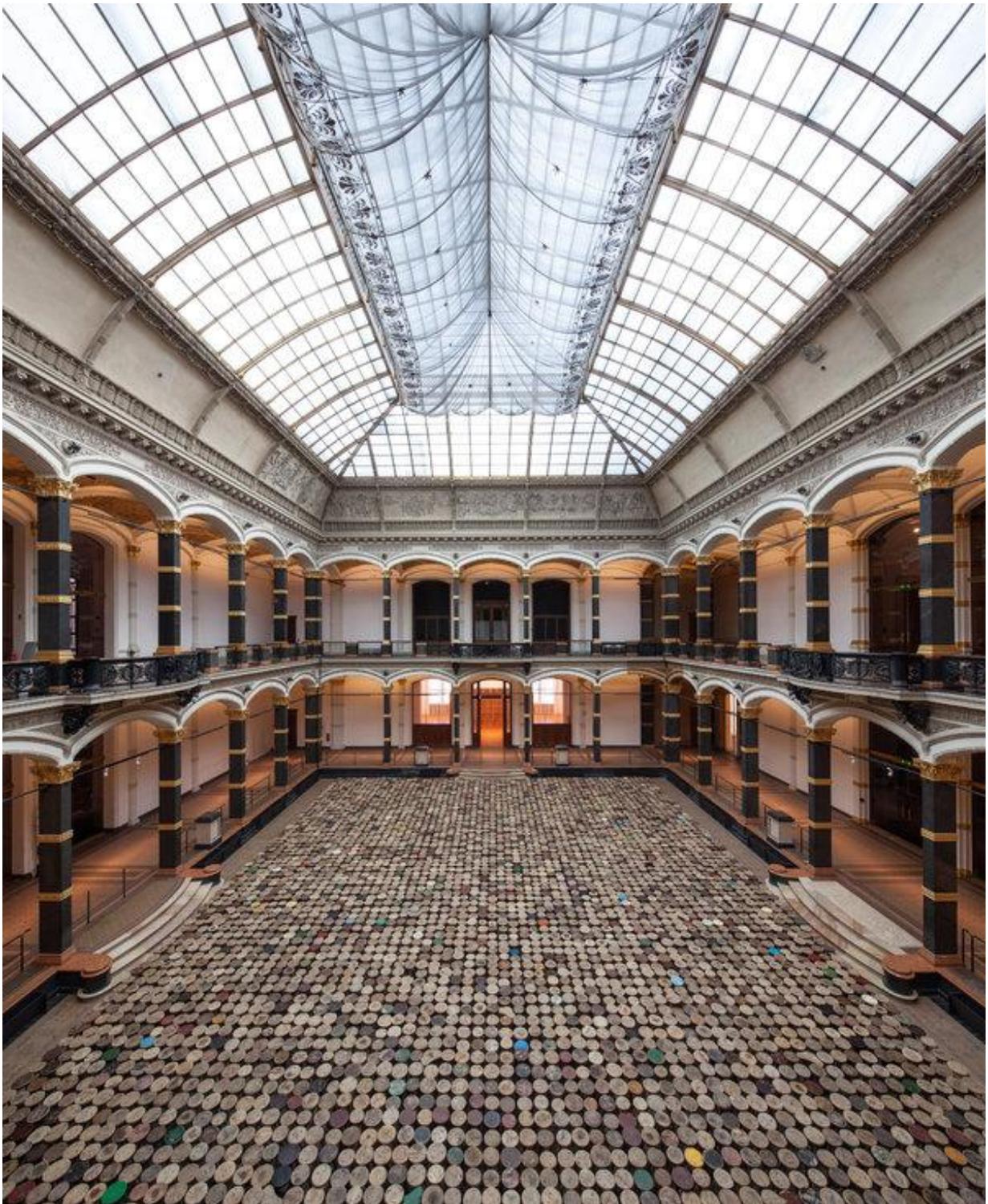
May 20, 2018

LOS ANGELES — While Ai Weiwei has had plenty of gallery shows and public artworks in New York, he has not had a substantial exhibition in Los Angeles. In October, he will have three.

Mr. Ai is taking over Jeffrey Deitch's new Hollywood gallery for its inaugural show, opening Sept. 29; he will be the next artist after Olafur Eliasson to make use of the sprawling ground-floor project space of the Marciano Art Foundation, opening Sept. 28; and, starting Oct. 4, he will show marble sculpture at the new UTA Artist Space in Beverly Hills in a building that he is helping to redesign.

“This is how Weiwei likes to do things: when he comes to a city, he takes over a city,” said Jamie Manné, deputy director of the Marciano Art Foundation. “It’s definitely not a collaboration, but we’re happy to coordinate with everyone.”

Image



Mr. Ai's "Stools" (2014) at the Gropius Bau in Berlin. The installation of more than 6,000 salvaged wooden stools will be shown at Jeffrey Deitch's new Hollywood gallery. Credit Ai Weiwei Studio

"L.A. strongly represents America, both geographically and culturally," the artist said by email. "These are my first exhibitions in the city and I'm very excited about it."

The Marciano will feature at least three large-scale works, including a new installation responding to the refugee crisis with boats, humans and zodiac figures crafted out of traditional kite-making materials: bamboo, sisal and silk. Mr. Deitch's new gallery will feature what he called "a good introduction to the artist's work," including an accumulation of 6,000 wooden stools, flea-market finds that represent hundreds of years (and thousands of families) in Chinese history; it reprises an installation from the Gropius Bau in Berlin. A new series of 12 portraits of the Chinese zodiac built out of Legos will also be shown. The opening of Mr. Deitch's Los Angeles gallery was originally scheduled for fall 2017, but was delayed for "permitting reasons," he said.

UTA Artist Space, a gallery overseen by Joshua Roth, the head of United Talent Agency's fine-art division, is showing a selection of Mr. Ai's work in marble, the highlight being a large field of grass rendered in a medium more often associated with monumental forms. The UTA gallery is in the process of relocating to Beverly Hills after less than two years in the Boyle Heights neighborhood, where it was one of the galleries targeted by anti-gentrification protesters. Mr. Roth said the gallery's closing there in April was not prompted by protests but by his happening upon an available building half a block from UTA headquarters, a poured-concrete light industrial space with wooden bow-truss ceilings — "a unicorn in Beverly Hills," he said.

Mr. Ai, who stopped his architecture practice after designing the 2008 Beijing Olympic Stadium, said he also responded to the building at first sight during a visit with Mr. Roth, whose agency represents his work as a filmmaker. "My instincts as an architect naturally kicked in," he said. He is now designing different elements of the space, including a new stairway and entry, with a goal of opening it by July 12. The gallery's first show, "One Shot," will feature Color Field painters such as Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland and Helen Frankenthaler.

Mr. Ai will also have a public talk with Michael Govan, director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, at the museum on Sept. 28. Lacma showed Mr. Ai's "Circle of Animals/Zodiac Heads," a group of bronze sculptures, in 2011-12.

[Ai Weiwei's Little Blue Book on the Refugee Crisis](#)

[April 23, 2018](#)

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[Ai Weiwei's Latest Artwork: Building Fences Throughout New York City](#)

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