

Ai Weiwei taps MASS MoCA as Lego Collection Point

Ai Weiwei's Lego Collection Point at MASS MoCA

Beginning November 16, 2015

massmoca.org

NORTH ADAMS, MASSACHUSETTS — MASS MoCA becomes the next cultural institution to participate in Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's Lego Collection Point. After Lego refused the Ai Weiwei Studio's request for a bulk order of Legos, Weiwei posted the company's response on Instagram on October 23, triggering a flood of responses on social media criticizing Lego for "censorship and discrimination." Thousands of supporters offered to donate used Legos to the artist. In response to the outpouring of interest, Weiwei created a systematic collection network for gathering donated Legos. He has chosen MASS MoCA and more than a dozen museums and cultural institutions around the world to participate as a Lego Collection Point.

Weiwei designated organizations to station a BMW car, provided by the artist, near their entrance, with its windows cracked, to allow donors to fill the cars with Legos, thus appropriating the ultimate corporate icon as an irony-rich, ultra-luxurious Lego piggy bank. This project, like many of Weiwei's works, reflects his engagement with political and social issues — in particular, freedom of speech — and his nimble exploitation of social media to communicate with a broad audience.

MASS MoCA was selected as a participating museum, and a BMW was placed outside the museum's front entrance on Monday, November 16, 2015. Visitors are invited to drop Legos into the car's open windows. Legos collected will be sent to the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia, where Weiwei will use them to design a series of flags.

About MASS MoCA

MASS MoCA is one of the world's liveliest (and largest) centers for making and enjoying today's most important art, music, dance, theater, film, and video. Hundreds of works of visual and performing art have been created on its 19th-century factory campus during fabrication and rehearsal residencies, making MASS MoCA among the most productive sites in the country for the creation and presentation of new art. More platform than box, MASS MoCA strives to bring to its audiences art experiences that are fresh, engaging, and transformative.