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"I Would Be Very Happy in China": Belgian Provocateur Wim Delvoye on Why Ai Weiwei Should Stop Complaining

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© Studio Wim Delvoye / Courtesy Sperone Westwater, New York

Wim Delvoye, "Art Farm China, Beijing," (2003 – 2010)

by Coline Milliard, ARTINFO UK

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Wim Delvoye has never been afraid of tweaking taboos. The Belgian artist made a name for himself in the 1990s with "Cloaca," a feces-producing machine, now in its 10th version. Until 2010, he worked with a pig farm in China where he had swine tattooed with intricate pictures, selling their skins were as artworks after their natural death. The artist even tattooed and sold the back of a human being, one Tim Steiner, in 2008.

The great provocateur is also behind X-rays of rats in a mock crucifixion position, tires hand-carved like precious wood, and gothic structures made from laser-cut steel. More than a 100 of his pieces are to be shown starting December 10 at the [Museum of Old and New Art](#) in Tasmania, Australia, a new institution that is the brainchild of collector and gambling genius **David Walsh**.

Delvoye was in the news recently for having publically invited **Ai Weiwei** to rebuild his studio, destroyed last year by the Chinese authorities, in the grounds of his mansion in Ghent, Belgium. He talked to **ARTINFO UK** about the failure of modernism, his hatred of nostalgia, and why he would feel less oppressed in China than in Europe.

You are about to open a very large exhibition at MONA, in Tasmania. How have you been working on this, and what can we expect?

MONA is a new museum. It doesn't have a reputation or a long history; it doesn't have the quality stamp yet. The museum and I have to work on this together. Nothing comes for free. Being a young museum also means that the attention is on them: it keeps them very focused, and it keeps me very focused. It's an interesting experience because it's not an established institution and things like decision-making and consensus-making are easier. Everything goes extremely quickly — no compromise.