

Ai Weiwei

On Clayton

I first met Clayton in 1988 during the Tompkins Square riot. He was this person who appeared at every demonstration with his wife, Elsa. Both of them were always there, filming all the time. He was the only person doing this kind of video at the time, his wife always standing close by, watching him and giving him supplies, such as batteries or tapes. He used to have a lot of fun and was addicted to his work.

His work is concerned with the truth, with facts. He has relentlessly devoted himself to a kind of culture that examines authority. He has devoted himself to recording what is really going on, to giving his true account. For this reason he has been taken to court many times. Once, right before he went into the courtroom, he showed me the palms of his hands where he had written in ink, “Dump Koch.” I captured that moment with my camera and brought it to the *New York Times*. That became the first photo of mine that ever appeared in the *New York Times*.

I consider Clayton a friend and I really like his style. His style is like no-style. I should say it is antistyle.