

Maya Lin Biography

"Merging History, Process and Their Legacy"

Maya's mother escaped from Shanghai during the bombing of 1949 and her father emigrated from Fujian and Beijing fleeing the communist regime.

Maya Lin, artist and architect, was still an undergraduate at Yale University when she won the national design competition for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be built near the Lincoln Memorial in D.C. Her sculpture presented a profound vision and compassion, merging history, process and their legacy.

In 2016, President Obama recognized Maya Lin's achievements with the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. "The Vietnam Veterans Memorial has changed the way we think about monuments, but also about how we think about sacrifice, and patriotism, and ourselves. Boldly challenging our understanding of the world, Maya Lin's work has brought people together in spirits of remembrance, introspection and humility. The manipulation of natural terrain and topography within her works inspires us to bridge our differences and recognize the gravity of our collective existence. Her pieces have changed the landscape of our country and influenced the dialogue of our society, never more profoundly than with her tribute to the Americans who fell in Vietnam by cutting a wound into the Earth to create a sacred place of healing in our Nation's capital."

One of Maya's current on-going commissions is the Confluence Project; the creation of a series of seven large scale art/landscape installations along the Columbia River in which she has used the historic journey of Lewis and Clark through this place as a "lens" giving insight into the physical and cultural histories of these sites. The purpose is to transform our understanding of what we have been so that we can build a lasting stewardship into the future.