



The Learning
Place

**Biography
Center**

◀ Biography Center

◀ News & Events

◀ Themes

Maya Lin



"I work with the landscape, and I hope that the object and the land are equal partners."

One of the rare few who has managed to forge a path in both art and architecture, Maya Lin is a sculptor, architect, designer, and craftswoman. Lin has consciously resisted divisions between architecture and design or fine and applied art.

Lin's parents are originally from Beijing and Shanghai but moved to Athens, Ohio in 1949. Her mother taught literature and her father taught art at Ohio University. Lin who grew up surrounded by art and literature was constantly delving into new projects and books. She credits her Asian-American heritage as the source of her refusal to separate East/West influences, reason and intuition, and left and right brain.

Lin attended Yale University, and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Architecture in 1981, and a Master of Architecture from Yale's School of Architecture in 1986. The following year, she opened a studio where she could complete art and architecture projects designed for locations throughout the country.

Influenced by the Earth Artists of the 60's and 70's, Lin brings a highly contemporary perspective to the landscape by merging the rational order of high technology with the transcendental and irregular forms of nature. She has continuously addressed the notion of landscape and topology in her work. She refers to the Women's Table (Yale University, 1993) and the Civil Rights Memorial (Southern Poverty Law Center, Montgomery, Alabama 1988-1993) as water tables-with the water and the historical information they offer, welling up as if from the earth itself. One of the primary images she had for the Vietnam Veterans' Memorial (The Mall, Washington, D. C.,

http://www.nwhp.org/tlp/biographies/lin/lin_bio.html

1981) was tearing at the earth.

Lin is strongly concerned about the environment, and incorporates recycled, living, or natural materials in her work such as in *The Wave Field* (University of Michigan, 1993-4), a sculpture of a molded field of grass. Her concerns led her to serve on the Board of Energy Foundation as well as on the National Advisory Board to the Presidio Council in San Francisco. Recently, Lin began collaborating with The Natural Resources Defense Council and Banana Kelly to design a paper recycling center for the South Bronx in New York.

She also serves on the Boards of The Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance project, the Kennedy Museum of Art, at Ohio University, and Studio in a School in New York. This work comes from her firm support of education and the arts.

The American vision Lin presents in her sculpture and architecture, is one of historic outcomes merged with both the process and the legacy.

Her many awards include the architecture prize from the American Academy of Arts and Letters for designing buildings like the Langston Hughes Library (Clinton, Tennessee, 1999) and the Museum for African Art (SoHo, New York, 1984-92). She has also received the Presidential Design Award, The American Institute of Architects Honor Award, and the Henry Bacon Memorial Award; and Honorary Doctorates in Fine Arts from Harvard, Yale, Brown, Smith, and Williams.

Lin lives in New York with her husband Daniel Wolf, and their two young children. She is currently working on sculpture installations for the Rockefeller Foundation Headquarters and the Cleveland Public Library.

◀ Biography Center

◀ News & Events

◀ Themes