

NATIONAL WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME NOMINATION FORM

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>>>Please Type All Information<<<

Nominee's Name: Maya Ying Lin

Nominee's Occupation, Field of Achievement or Title: Architect
(example: Suffragist, Author, Political Activist, Scientist, Explorer, Senator, etc.)

For what achievement(s) is nominee best known? Creating the Vietnam Veterans Memorial

Nominee's Date of Birth: October 5, 1959

Nominee's Date of Death (if applicable): n/a

Nomination Submitted by: John Doe

Signature of Submitter: John Doe

Date: 01/01/01

Title/Occupation of Submitter: Museum Director

Affiliation/Association to Nominee: Friend

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION: Please provide essential biographical information about the nominee on this page only. Essential biographical information includes: birthplace or date of naturalization, education/training, professional/work history, major accomplishments and/or contributions and honors/awards received. DO NOT ATTACH ANOTHER BIO, RESUMÉ OR ARTICLE AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR USING THIS FORM. All information in this section should be stated in narrative form. A list of references and citations will not be considered complete biographical information.

>>>Please Type All Information<<<

Maya Lin's parents were both well educated. Henry Huan Lin, her father, was a ceramist and a dean of fine arts at Ohio State University. Her mother Julia Chang Lin is a professor of literature at Ohio State University. Maya Lin was born on October 5, 1959 in Athens, Ohio. She went on to graduate with her B.A. from Yale University School of Architecture with honors in 1981. She then went on to receive her M.A. in 1986 from Yale University. During her college education she was required to enter a competition for the design of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. Out of 1,420 entries her design was selected.

The celebrated and debated design was a simple one based on a more eastern type of art. Her idea consisted of two black granite walls that came together at a 125-degree angle. According to Military City, "Maya Lin the designer conceived her design as creating a park within a park – a quiet protected place that was unto itself yet harmonized with the overall plan of Constitution Gardens. To achieve that effect, she chose polished black granite for the walls. Its mirror-like surface reflects the images of the surrounding trees, lawns, and monuments. The walls point to the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, thus bringing the Memorial into the historical context of our country. The names are inscribed in the chronological date of casualty, showing the war as a series of individual sacrifices and giving each name a special place in history." By creating such a non-traditional memorial, it sparked much disagreement between veterans and other people involved. Maya Lin became the center of this controversy over her cultural background and her design. With quiet dignity she went under fire. To defend a difficult design of a memorial that included no political statement. Ross Perot in the midst of the controversy wanted to include a statue of heroes in the middle of the memorial to honor the soldiers of the war. He believed that the design did not do the heroes justice. Although he got his statue, the virtue of the subtle memorial was kept. The statue of soldiers was placed at the beginning of the walkway not close to the memorial, therefore not distracting from its intended message.

In 1984, Maya Lin received the AIA, Henry Bacon Memorial Award. A NEA grant was given to her in 1988; also Metropolitan Home Elements of Style, design 100 in 1990. Maya Lin has designed many other significant pieces of architectural design. In 1988, she designed the Southern Poverty Center in Montgomery, Alabama. She also, co-designed the Museum for African Art, New York City, with David Houston, in 1993. Maya designed the Civil Rights Memorial also, which commemorated the events of the Civil Rights Movement. Other works, for which Maya is noted for are Groundswell and The Wavefield. The Wavefield mixed Maya's love for the natural environment with her love of artwork.

Maya's own book, *Boundaries*, was published in 2000. It is an autobiography of her struggles and achievements in becoming a well-known architect of the 20th century, even though some of her work challenged the norms of tradition.

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QUESTIONS 1 -3: Do not repeat the biographical information given in the previous section. Please put the nominee's accomplishments in context; show how they are relevant and valuable to society.

>>>Please Type All Information<<<

- 1. Describe in what ways the nominee's contributions have been of the greatest value for the development of the United States of America. (Nominees who are not leaders in their field of accomplishment will not be selected.)**

Maya Lin created the idea for the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial as a student at Yale University. The designer was praised as a "profound symbol that has served to unify and reconcile a nation." Her design was chosen as the best out of from 1,420 entries. This successful and controversial addition to the United States, lead to her being commissioned to build a Civil Rights Memorial. This masterpiece memorializes the controversy that the United States has faced. As people come to visit the memorial today they cannot help to think about the racial struggles throughout history. Water flows over the glasslike stone, the words of Martin Luther King are central, "...UNTIL JUSTICE ROLLS DOWN LIKE WATERS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE A MIGHTY STREAM." The events of the civil rights movement are engraved in chronological order. The viewer can follow the events until the death of Martin Luther King and mentally add the progresses and setbacks of today to the circular stone. In an interview by *The San Francisco Chronicle* regarding the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Maya Lin said, "I really did mean for people to cry." The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was not only for the people that died in the Vietnam War, but also for the people that survived. Walking down the concrete path, tears can be seen in the eyes of many, as they remember the past. The scent of flowers shows that we can never forget. War is such a powerful and confusing act, that it takes the simplest yet most beautiful design to be remembered for what it really was...a bloodbath of fellow Americans, of many young men and women. It serves to remind America of the price of war.

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- 2. Describe the significant national or global impact of the nominee's achievements. Quantify the answer where possible. (Individuals whose contributions are local or regional will not qualify.)**

Maya Lin's creation of the great Vietnam Veteran's Memorial was important in commemorating soldiers that fought and died for America in Vietnam. It also attempted to bring peace between the citizens of the United States and Vietnam. The memorial makes the viewer rethink the value of war and what was gained or lost from the killing of innocent men and women.

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- 3. Present evidence that the nominee's achievements have (or will have) enduring value. Where applicable, focus your comments on change that has been created and how that change is expected to last over time.**

Maya Lin has set the precedent for future war memorials. Instead of glorifying war, the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial enables the viewer to interact with the memorial. The reflection of the viewer can be seen in the glossy black stone. The quiet, sobering air that surrounds the memorial makes any person that visits rethink war. The long stone seems to go on forever, all the names engraved in chronological order, so that a person can interact with it, transcending them for a moment to Vietnam during the war years. The simplicity enables a person to "fill in the blanks;" all the viewer knows of war is that the names engraved on the stone are all of dead men and women, who gave their lives for war.

The Civil Rights Memorial will also live on in the minds of many. For generations after the Civil Rights movement people will remember those who gave their lives for the teachings of Martin Luther King, to stand without fighting back at those who hate with such force. As the memorial stands in Alabama, eyes cannot help but wander to the fountain while one rethinks the value of personality over the color of a person's skin.

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Sources of Biographical Information: Be sure to include complete citations of sources of biographical information used to write the nomination (reference books, periodicals, etc.).

>>>Please Type All Information<<<

<http://www.public.asv.edu/~dejesus/210entries/Lindale.htm>

<http://womensearlyart.net/lin/index.html>

http://myhero.com/hero.asp?hero=m_lin

Lin, Maya. Boundaries. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

<http://www.nps.gov/vive/memorial/design.htm>

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/treasures/trm022.html>

Landers, Ann, Van Buren, Abigail and Mays, Willie, Grolier Inc. 2001.

The H.W. Wilson Company, NY. Current Biography Yearbook, 1993.

<http://www.sfgate.com/ea/stack/1110.2html>

<http://ohio.bio.org/lin.htm>