



## ARTIST, DESIGNER AND ENVIRONMENTALIST MAYA LIN TO RECEIVE THE 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL DOROTHY AND LILLIAN GISH PRIZE

**Award Ceremony Will Take Place November 12, 2014 at  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York**



**NEW YORK, NY, October 8, 2014** — The Gish Prize Trust today announced that internationally renowned artist, designer and environmentalist Maya Lin will receive the 21<sup>st</sup> annual Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize. In keeping with the mission of the Prize, the award recognizes Lin for her outstanding and continuing artistic contributions to society and to the beauty of the world.

Established in 1994 through the will of the legendary actress Lillian Gish, the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize is widely regarded as one of the most prestigious honors given to artists in the United States and bears one of the largest cash awards, currently valued at \$300,000. Over the past two decades, the Gish Prize Trust has paid tribute to Lillian Gish's achievements as the First Lady of American Cinema by recognizing highly accomplished artists who have pushed the boundaries of their art forms, contributed to social change and paved the way for the next generation. Maya Lin now joins a roster of honorees that includes Frank Gehry, Bob Dylan, Arthur Miller, Shirin Neshat, Ornette Coleman, Trisha Brown, Anna Deavere Smith and Spike Lee.

The Gish Prize will be presented to Maya Lin on the evening of Wednesday, November 12, 2014 in New York City at a private event at The Museum of Modern Art, attended by leaders of the arts community. Speakers who are scheduled to help present the Gish Prize are Michael R. Bloomberg; architecture critic Paul Goldberger; and the Toby Devan Lewis Director of The New Museum, Lisa Phillips.

Maya Lin stated, "I am deeply touched and grateful to become a part of this astonishing line of Prize winners, all of whom were selected because of the very simple but powerful goal set down by Lillian Gish: to bring recognition to the contributions that artists make to society, and to encourage others to follow on that path. Because I have been donating so much of my time over the past seven years to a single long-term project, *What Is Missing?*, the award will make an enormous difference in enabling me to move the work forward."

In her remarkable career, Maya Lin has created a powerful and highly influential body of work within both art and architecture that includes large-scale site-specific installations, intimate studio artworks, architectural works and memorials. In her large-scale environmental artworks such as the recent *A Fold in the Field* (2013), *Storm King Wavefield* (2009) and the epoch-making *Vietnam Veterans' Memorial*, she has consistently explored how we experience and relate to the landscape, setting up a systematic ordering of the land that is tied to history, time and language. Her studio artworks, which have been shown in solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States and abroad (most recently at the Pace

Gallery in London and New York and at the Parrish Art Museum), often build upon advanced technological methods of visualizing geographic features to inspire a deeper relationship between the viewer and the natural world. Her architectural projects, which are often undertaken at the request of non-profit institutions, include the recently completed Museum for Chinese in America in New York City and the Riggio-Lynch Interfaith Chapel and Langston Hughes Library for the Children's Defense Fund in Clinton, Tennessee. A committed environmentalist, Maya Lin is now working on what she anticipates will be her final redefinition of the memorial, *What Is Missing?*, which focuses on the current crisis of biodiversity and directs attention not toward the past but the future, and the potential for saving species and habitats. An ongoing multi-site work, *What Is Missing?* exists in select scientific institutions, as a website and as a book. It debuted in its first iteration at the California Academy of Sciences in 2009 with a sound and media sculpture installation.

This year's Gish Prize selection committee chose Maya Lin from among a group of nearly 100 nominees in all fields of the arts, who had been nominated by members of the arts community. The selection committee for 2014 was committee chair **David Henry Hwang**, playwright, librettist and screenwriter; **Ella Baff**, executive and artistic director of Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival; **Fairfax Dorn**, executive director of Ballroom Marfa; **Clive Gillinson**, executive and artistic director of Carnegie Hall; and **Carrie Mae Weems**, visual artist.

David Henry Hwang stated, "I first became a juror for the Gish Prize in 2005, and have now been honored to serve four times, twice as chair. I love the Gish both for its eclecticism – the winner can be a living artist in any discipline, of any nationality – and its interest in the context of an artist's work. The Gish Prize recognizes an internationally renowned virtuoso whose artistic excellence is indisputable, one whose life and work demonstrate a commitment to improving society and our world. With her design for the Vietnam Memorial, Maya Lin created arguably the most important piece of public art of our time. Since then, she has continued to achieve greatness, through a singular vision which has come to embrace her passionate concern for the environment – in America, China and throughout this planet. Ms. Lin's combination of artistic excellence and public advocacy embodies the Gish sisters' vision to honor an artist who makes our world a better place."

Carrie Mae Weems stated, "When the jury got into the discussions, the name of Maya Lin kept rising to the top. She is truly one of America's great artists, who speaks to our historical moment in a way that few artists do. And not only is she continuing to create a body of purposeful work without equal, out of deep aesthetic principles, but she has laid down tracks that have allowed other artists to follow. These are exactly the goals of the Gish Prize."

JPMorgan Chase & Co. serves as trustee of the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize Trust. Speaking on behalf of the Trust, Senior Philanthropy Advisor and Managing Director Jacqueline E. Elias stated, "Lillian Gish's vision in creating this prize speaks to her life-long dedication to promoting a vital arts sector that supports promising and exceptionally talented people. By choosing Maya Lin to receive the 21<sup>st</sup> Gish Prize, our esteemed selection committee reinforced the importance of design and art in the human experience and acknowledged the potential that remains in Ms. Lin's ongoing endeavors. JPMorgan Chase is honored to be associated with such an auspicious endeavor, and we congratulate Maya Lin on receiving this honor."

### **About The Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize**

Established in 1994 through the will of Lillian Gish, the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize is given annually to an individual who has "made an outstanding contribution to the beauty of the world and to mankind's enjoyment and understanding of life." Past recipients, from 1994 through 2013, are Frank Gehry, Ingmar Bergman, Robert Wilson, Bob Dylan, Isabel Allende, Arthur Miller, Merce Cunningham, Jennifer Tipton, Lloyd Richards, Bill T. Jones, Ornette Coleman, Peter Sellars, Shirin Neshat, Laurie Anderson, Robert

Redford, Pete Seeger, Chinua Achebe, Trisha Brown, Anna Deavere Smith and Spike Lee. Prize recipients are nominated by the arts community and chosen by a distinguished committee of arts leaders for their groundbreaking work in their chosen fields. The Gish Prize selection committee, a group that changes every year, has included choreographer Garth Fagan, filmmaker Mira Nair, sculptor Martin Puryear, composer Alvin Singleton, President Emerita of The Museum of Modern Art Agnes Gund, and Senior Advisor for Global Programs at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and President Emerita of the Asia Society, Vishaka Desai. For further information, visit [www.gishprize.com](http://www.gishprize.com).

### **About Dorothy and Lillian Gish**

Dorothy and Lillian Gish followed their mother onto the stage at an early age. The older of the two sisters, Lillian took her first theatrical curtain call in 1902 at the age of eight in the play *In Convict's Stripes*. In 1912, the sisters' childhood friend Mary Pickford introduced them to D.W. Griffith, who launched their film careers. Lillian would become one of America's best-loved actresses and is considered by many the First Lady of the Screen. In her 85-year career, she appeared in more than 100 films—from Griffith's *An Unseen Enemy* (1912) to Lindsay Anderson's *The Whales of August* (1987)—and also took numerous roles in television and on stage. Dorothy Gish began her stage career at the age of four and also went on to make more than 100 films, many of them with Lillian. Dorothy's early work in film highlighted her keen sense of humor, bringing her acclaim as a star of comedy. At the end of the silent era, she turned her attention to the stage, where success in *Young Love* brought her accolades with New York audiences, on the road and subsequently in London. In 1939 Dorothy and Lillian each played Vinnie Day, wife of Clarence Day, Sr., in two extensive American road company productions of *Life with Father*. Dorothy returned to film and television in the 1950s. Upon her death in 1968, Dorothy Gish left the bulk of her estate to the arts. Lillian Gish died in 1993 and also left the bulk of her estate to the arts, including a trust for the formation of the Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize.

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