

Glenbow

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Globally Renowned Artist Maya Lin Revealed as Designer of Glenbow's Rooftop Terrace

Terrace will be Lin's first project in Canada

Calgary, AB – October 26, 2023 – Glenbow is ecstatic to announce that internationally recognized artist Maya Lin will design the rooftop terrace in the museum's new home at the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture.

The 13,000-square-foot terrace will be a transformational addition to Glenbow and to downtown Calgary, offering a public amenity that further establishes the city as a global arts and culture destination. The space overlooks downtown Calgary, with western views of Stephen Avenue and iconic surrounding buildings like the Calgary Tower, TELUS Sky and The Bow.

The terrace will include an all-season pavilion, event spaces, sculpture and gardens, along with a skylight and oculus to filter natural light into the museum. As a leader across these fields, Lin is uniquely qualified to plan this space. This will be her first project in Canada.

Lin came to international prominence in 1981 when she was selected at age 21 to design the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC. What we know today as "The Wall" established a new standard for memorial design worldwide and was the launch of a decades-long career that has spanned sculpture, landscape design and architecture in many countries. Lin has been recognized with the Presidential Medal of Freedom (2016) and by a lifetime achievement award from the World Economic Forum (2023). She is currently contributing a commissioned water garden to the Obama Presidential Center, opening in 2025. In addition, a documentary about her work, *Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision*, received an Academy Award in 1994.

Glenbow's terrace will offer a welcoming space for all to enjoy, thanks to the Shaw Family Foundation and their transformational donation of \$25 million to establish the JR Shaw Free Admission Endowment. "We are transforming a 50-year-old roof at the museum into a community-oriented place where you can come up out of downtown and find refuge and respite to celebrate the arts surrounded by Glenbow's program and collections," says Nicholas R. Bell, President & CEO of Glenbow. "We are so excited that Maya Lin is the visionary who will shape this experience for our visitors."

Lin's design emphasizes natural elements drawn from the prairie landscape as a way to soften the space and invite community. Of the design, Lin says, "The space will afford a welcoming place that will invite visitors to connect to art, landscape and the city of Calgary."

Lin cites adaptive reuse as a key reason she was attracted to the project. "This idea that we are recycling a building in the center of downtown Calgary and making something new out of it while utilizing as much of the old building was a huge draw for me," she says. "If we can use an existing building in a better way, it is a lot more energy efficient, it is a lot more material efficient, and it sends a very different message about resource consumption and directly counters attitudes about a throwaway culture."

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“Since 1966, Glenbow has raised the bar for arts and culture in Alberta through exhibitions and programming,” says Minister of Arts, Culture and Status of Women Tanya Fir. “We’re excited to see them attract renowned artist Maya Lin to design their rooftop terrace, cementing the reimagined Glenbow as a must-see in downtown Calgary and Alberta’s cultural treasure chest.”

For Mayor Jyoti Gondek, the project is an example of how Glenbow is helping contribute to downtown vibrancy and renewal. “Working with Maya Lin to reimagine Glenbow represents a significant new chapter in the revitalization of Calgary’s downtown,” she says. “The incorporation of international mastery alongside an incredible team of local experts is a true reflection of what makes Calgary such a unique place.”

Beyond the terrace, the design of Glenbow’s new home at the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture is being led by DIALOG. The reimagined museum is scheduled to open in mid-2026.

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About Glenbow

Founded in 1966 as an independent, non-profit museum, archive, and gallery, Glenbow cares for an extraordinary collection of more than 250,000 works of art and historical belongings – from Canada and cultures around the world – on behalf of the people of Alberta. *Glenbow Reimagined* is a project to renovate the museum’s 50-year-old building and provide a vibrant, thriving cultural resource in the heart of Calgary, committed to expanding the accessibility and impact of arts and culture. Glenbow’s main building is closed as it renovates to become the JR Shaw Centre for Arts & Culture. While renovations are underway, visitors can experience exhibitions at the museum’s satellite gallery, Glenbow at The Edison.

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