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Maya Lin, Creator of *Ecliptic* at Rosa Parks Circle, Returns to Grand Rapids Ten Years After Downtown Sculpture Dedication

A Lecture is Scheduled for 7:00pm October 2 at the Grand Rapids Art Museum

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., September 20, 2010 – The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) and Herman Miller welcome internationally renowned artist Maya Lin back to Grand Rapids to present the lecture “Projects and Processes” at the Art Museum on Saturday, October 2 at 7:00pm. This is the artist’s first visit since the new Museum facility was completed adjacent to her park sculpture, *Ecliptic* at Rosa Parks Circle. The year 2011 marks the 10th anniversary of the dedication of *Ecliptic* in downtown Grand Rapids.

Maya Lin’s visit coincides with ArtPrize, and the lecture and general admission to GRAM are free of charge. Complimentary tickets will be available through the guest services desk at 10:00 am on the day of the presentation for the Cook Auditorium seating, limited to the first 275 guests. The lecture will be simulcast in the Museum Lobby for overflow audiences. The Auditorium will open for reserved seating at 6:30 pm. Unclaimed reserved seats will be released for general seating promptly at 6:45 pm.

“We are thrilled to welcome such an accomplished artist back to Grand Rapids and introduce her to the new Art Museum that overlooks her beautiful sculpture at Rosa Parks Circle,” said GRAM Interim Director Randy Van Antwerp. “Her appearance at GRAM, which occurs during the excitement of ArtPrize, helps bring further awareness to the arts and how they enrich our lives.”

According to Marg Mojzak, Director of Herman Miller’s retail division, “It is truly an honor for HermanMiller to sponsor Maya Lin’s return to Grand Rapids. Not only is she one of the most recognized figures in the art and design world, but she embodies a new cultural and environmental sensitivity that is uniquely aligned with our own commitment to social responsibility. And as an authorized Herman Miller retailer, the GRAM is the perfect partner for this special event.”

About Ecliptic at Rosa Parks Circle

The underlying idea of the design involves the uses of water in its three physical states: liquid, solid and vapor. Inspired by the city's name, "Grand Rapids," the use of water is literally the undercurrent to the Park.

There are two circular granite fountains, one marking the northern entrance and the other marking the southern entrance. The first is a raised circle with continuously flowing water gently cascading from one half of the fountain to the other. The second circle is set into the ground with a low stone ring that has a hidden mist fountain. This creates a room of mist that one can sit around or step into. The walkway connecting the two fountains is landscaped into gentle rolling waves of grass, expressive of water waves.

At the heart of the park is the amphitheater with curved seating terraces suggesting the concentric rings formed by a drop of water or the elliptical orbit of planets. In the winter the amphitheater becomes an ice skating rink. Although water must freeze on a flat level plane, Lin consciously sloped the seating surrounding the rink so that when one stands upon this elliptical plane there is an illusion that the surface is tilted.

Embedded into the concrete floor of the amphitheater are fiber optic points of light that map out the exact location of the stars overhead on January 1, 2000, marking the Park's place in time and the passage into the new millennium. These stars are visible year round and are magnified in the winter months, as their light refracts under the ice. The artist imagined a still pond reflecting the night sky.

About the artist

Maya Lin has maintained a careful balance between art and architecture throughout her career, creating a remarkable body of work that includes large-scale site-specific installations, intimate studio artworks, architectural works and memorials.

Landscape is the context and the source of inspiration for Ms. Lin's art. She peers curiously at the landscape through a twenty-first century lens, merging rational and technological order with notions of beauty and the transcendental. Utilizing technological methods to study and visualize the natural world, Ms. Lin takes micro and macro views of the earth, sonar resonance scans, aerial and satellite mapping devices and translates that information into sculptures, drawings and environmental installations. Her works address how we relate and respond to the environment, and presents new ways of looking at the world around us.

Maya Lin has been drawn to the critical social and historical issues of our time and addressed them in her memorials, including the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial in Washington DC, the Civil Rights Memorial in Montgomery, AL, the Women's Table at Yale University. Currently she is working on the Confluence Project, a multi-sited installation spanning the Columbia River system in the Pacific Northwest that intertwines the history of Lewis and Clark with the history of the Native American tribes who inhabit those regions..

Maya Lin received her Master of Architecture from Yale University in 1986, and has maintained a professional studio in New York City since then. She serves on the Board of Trustees of the Natural Resources Defense Council and is a former member of the Yale Corporation and the Energy Foundation. She is the recipient of numerous prizes and awards, including the Presidential Design Award, a National Endowment for the Arts artist' award, the William A. Bernoudy Resident in Architecture fellowship from the American Academy in Rome, the Award in Architecture from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, an AIA Honor Award, the Finn Juhl Prize, and honorary doctorates from Yale, Harvard, Williams, and Smith College among others.

She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and in 2005 was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame. She has been profiled in magazines such as Time Magazine, The New York Times Magazine and The New

Yorker. In 1996 a documentary about her work, *Maya Lin: A Strong Clear Vision* won the Academy Award for Best Documentary. Her book *Boundaries*, about her work and creative processes, is in its fifth printing with Simon & Schuster. Her architecture and artworks have consistently elicited praise and received awards from magazines and periodicals ranging from *Time* and *Newsweek* to *Art in America* and *Architectural Record* and *The New York Times*.

Images available upon request.

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About the Grand Rapids Art Museum

The Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM) celebrates 100 years of art, legacy and vision with its Centennial Year in 2010. The mission of the Grand Rapids Art Museum is to provide a gathering place where people of all ages and backgrounds can enrich their lives through interaction with works of art in a thought-provoking and creative way. Established in the heart of downtown Grand Rapids, the new art museum is internationally known for its distinguished design and LEED Gold certified status. Established in 1910 as the Grand Rapids Art Association, GRAM has grown to include more than 5,000 works of art, including American and European 19th and 20th century painting and sculpture and over 3,000 works on paper. Embracing the city's legacy as a leading center of design and manufacturing, GRAM has a growing collection in the area of design and modern craft.

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