

# LOOKING TO LEARN

August 2022

This month we looked at Maya Lin's *Silver Chesapeake*, read the book *Maya Lin: Artist-Architect of Light and Lines* by Jeanne Walker Harvey, and created a metal embossing as we talked about the meaning of reflection. If you missed our program or are looking to continue the discussion from home, here are the highlights!

**REFLECTION:** Reflection means to think deeply about something and is an essential process to engage in. It is important to reflect on the processes and systems of nature and how we can take care of them. Reflection can also refer to an image mirrored in glass or a shiny surface. We will dive into this two-fold meaning of reflection in our artmaking activity today!



Maya Lin, *Silver Chesapeake*, 2009.  
Recycled Silver. Installation photo by  
Echard Wheeler.

## **SILVER CHESAPEAKE BY MAYA LIN**

Let's look at the sculpture together.

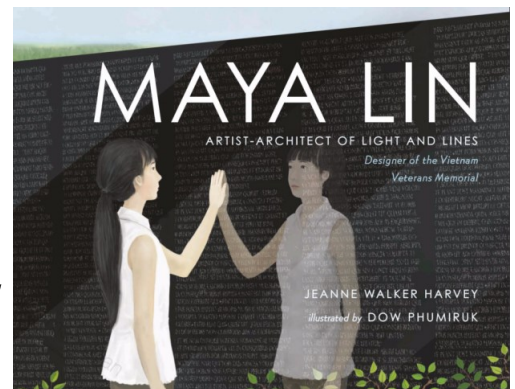
- What do you see?
- What material do you think the artist used? What makes you say that?
- What do you know about silver?
- Why do you think the artist chose to create a waterway with silver?
- What do you think the artist is trying to tell us?

Silver has been considered a precious metal since it was first discovered. It has high economic value, a reflective sheen, and requires special care to prevent it from tarnishing. *Silver Chesapeake* was made by melting recycled silver into a liquid and pouring it into a mold made of the Chesapeake Bay. By choosing silver as her medium to create the Chesapeake Bay, Maya Lin has captured the reflective quality of water, nodded to its need for care, and called attention to the economic value of the bay and its inhabitants.

## **MAYA LIN: ARTIST-ARCHITECT OF LIGHT AND LINES BY JEANNE WALKER HARVEY**

Jeanne Walker Harvey recounts the early life of Maya Lin and what led her to become the artist she is today. Soft and realistic illustrations by Dow Phumiruk contribute to this inspiring tale of achievement. Read the story and consider the questions below!

- What were Maya's interests and influences as a young girl? How did she use art as a tool to think?
- What contest did Maya Lin enter as a college student? What was the result of this contest?
- How would you describe Maya Lin's sculpture for the contest? How did she use the tool of reflection in her design?
- Reflection means to think, but can also refer to an image mirrored in glass or a shiny surface. How can you see both meanings in this story?
- What could you ask others to reflect on (or think about) through art?



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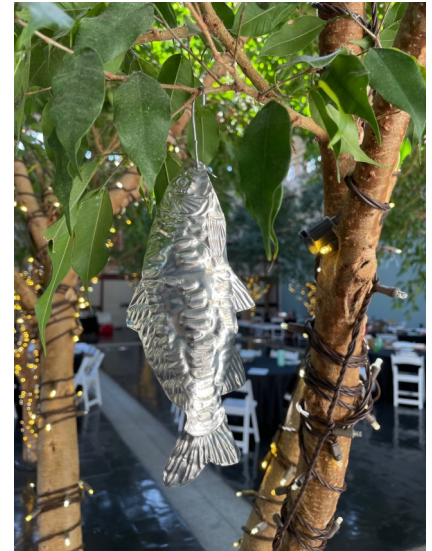
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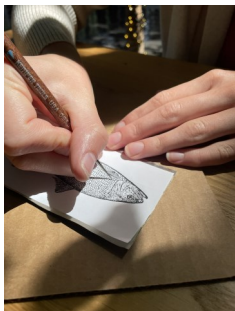
**ART MAKING ACTIVITY:** Embossing is the process of leaving a raised impression on a surface. Today we are going to create our own embossing on metal to practice the process of reflection. Just as Maya Lin created *Silver Chesapeake* with a reflective metal to send a message of environmental awareness, we will also use a reflective metal to create an artwork with a powerful message. Let's reflect on all of the fish that call the Chesapeake Bay home. How can we value and protect them?

## SUPPLY LIST:

- Sheet of 36 gauge aluminum
- Thumb tack
- Embossing tool(s)
- Cardboard
- Ornament hook
- Tape
- Scissors
- [Fish of the Chesapeake Bay print-out](#)



## INSTRUCTIONS:



1. Look at the Fish of the Chesapeake Bay print-out. Cut out the fish you would like to create with.

2. Lay your printed fish on top of the metal and use a piece of tape to secure. Try not to cover the image with tape.

3. Place your metal on top of a piece of cardboard.

4. With medium pressure, use the embossing tools to go over the lines and details of the fish. You can flip your design over at any point to see what has transferred!

5. Once you have embossed your base design, remove the fish image and go back over your tracings on the metal to make them stand out more.

6. Use a pair of scissors to cut out the fish shape from metal. Be careful of sharp edges! Flip over to view your completed embossing.

7. Use the thumb tack to poke a hole near the mouth of the fish for the hook. Now use your hands to curve your fish outward and make it 3-dimensional.

8. Thread your ornament hook through the hole, and your native fish is ready for display!

