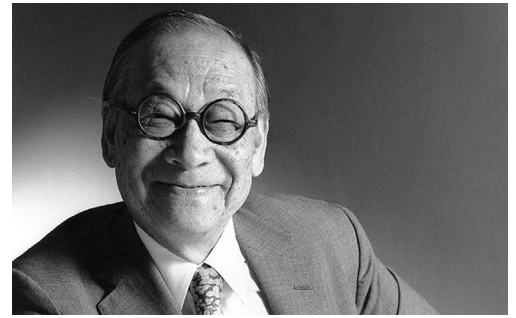


# Bartholomew County Public Library



## I.M. Pei, Architect of the Cleo Rogers Memorial Library

I. M. Pei was born in Guangzhou (formerly known as Canton) China on April 26, 1917 and was raised in Hong Kong and Shanghai. His father was a prominent banker. In 1935, at age 17, he came to the United States to study architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Pei received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from MIT in 1940. He was awarded the Alpha Rho Chi Medal, the MIT Traveling Fellowship and AIA Gold Medal upon graduation. In 1942, Pei enrolled in the Harvard Graduate School of Design where he studied under Walter Gropius; six months later, he volunteered his services to the National Defense Research Committee in Princeton.

During 1942, Pei married Eileen Loo. Their family eventually included three sons and one daughter. Pei returned to Harvard in 1944 and completed a Masters of Architecture in 1946, simultaneously teaching on the faculty as assistant professor (1945-48). Awarded the Wheelwright Traveling Fellowship by Harvard in 1951, he traveled in England, France, Italy and Greece.

Pei became a naturalized citizen of the United States in 1954. In 1948, William Zeckendorf invited Mr. Pei to accept the newly created post of Director of Architecture at Webb & Knapp real estate development corporation, resulting in many large-scale architectural and planning projects across the country. In 1955 he formed the partnership of I. M. Pei & Associates, which became I. M. Pei & Partners in 1966, and Pei, Cobb, Freed & Partners in 1989. The partnership received the 1968 Architectural Firm Award of the American Institute of Architects.

Mr. Pei's personal architectural style blossomed with his design for the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colorado (1961-67). He subsequently gained broad national attention with the East Building of the National Gallery of Art in Washington (1968-78) and the John Fitzgerald Kennedy Library in Boston (1965-79). His work includes churches, hospitals, municipal buildings, schools, libraries, and over a dozen museums. His most recent works include the Museum of Modern Art in Athens, the Miho Museum in Shiga, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, the Grand Louvre in Paris, and the Morton H. Meyerson Symphony Center in Dallas.

Among Mr. Pei's skyscraper designs are the 72-story Bank of China Tower in Hong Kong (the tallest building in Asia) and the Four Seasons Hotel in midtown Manhattan. Other hotels by Mr. Pei include the Hotel Place d'Iena in Paris, Raffles City in Singapore, and Fragrant Hill Hotel in his native country of China.

Mr. Pei's deep interest in the arts and education is evidenced by his numerous memberships on Visiting Committees at Harvard and MIT, as well as on several governmental panels. He has also served on the AIA Task Force on the West Front of the U.S. Capitol. A member of the AIA National Urban Policy Task Force and of the Urban Design Council of the City of New York, he was appointed to the National Council on the Humanities by President Lyndon Johnson in 1966, and to the National Council on the Arts by President Jimmy Carter in 1980.

In 1983, Mr. Pei was chosen the Laureate of the Pritzker Architecture Prize: he used the \$100,000 award to establish a scholarship fund for Chinese students to study architecture in the United States (with the strict proviso that they return to China to practice their profession).

Among the many academic awards bestowed on Mr. Pei are honorary doctorates from the University of Pennsylvania, Columbia University, New York University, Brown University, the University of Colorado, the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and the American University of Paris, among others.

Mr. Pei was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and a Corporate Member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and has also been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Design, and the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. In 1975 he was elected to the American Academy itself, which is restricted to a lifetime membership of fifty. Three years later he became Chancellor of the Academy, the first architect to hold that position, and served until 1980.

Mr. Pei was inducted a “Membre de l’Institut de France” in 1984, and decorated by the French government as a Commandeur in the “Ordre des Arts et des Lettres” in 1985. On July 4, 1986, he was one of twelve naturalized American citizens to receive the Medal of Liberty from President Ronald Reagan. Two years later French president François Mitterrand inducted I. M. Pei as a Chevalier in the Légion d’Honneur, and raised him to the rank of Officer upon completion of Phase II of the Grand Louvre in 1993. Also in 1993, Pei was elected an Honorary Academician of the Royal Academy of Arts in London.

Among Mr. Pei’s many professional honors are The Arnold Brunner Award of the National Institute of Arts and Letters (1963); The Medal of Honor of the New York Chapter of The American Institute of Architects (1963); The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Medal “for distinguished contribution to the field of architecture” (1976); The Gold Medal for Architecture of the American Academy of Arts and Letters (1979); The Mayor’s Award of Honor for Art and Culture (New York City, 1981); and The Gold Medal of Alpha Rho Chi, the National Professional Fraternity of Architects (1981).

In 1979, I. M. Pei received The AIA Gold Medal, the highest architectural honor in the United States. Three years later he received the Grande Medaille d’Or from the French Academie d’Architecture. In 1989, the Japan Art Association awarded him the Praemium Imperiale for lifetime achievement in architecture, and in the following year UCLA bestowed the University’s Gold Medal. In 1991, Mr. Pei received the Excellence 2000 Award and the Colbert Foundation’s First Award for Excellence. In 1993 he was awarded the Medal of Freedom by President George Bush. I. M. Pei designed nearly fifty projects in the United States and abroad; more than half have won major awards. Mr. Pei passed away on May 16, 2019 at the age of 102.

*“One has to persist, and not give up principle. But there are many ways of persisting, many ways of trying to convince a client to do certain things. There’s a polite way; there’s an impolite way, but that doesn’t mean I’m less insistent, less demanding, ...not at all. I’m probably as demanding as any creative person. But you have to identify the important things, and then press for them, not give up.” -- I.M. Pei*