



I. M. Pei

Architect (1917 –)

Ieoh Ming Pei, commonly known by his initial I. M. Pei, was born in Canton, China to a prominent family. They later moved to Shanghai, but resided in Suzhou, a city nearby. The family's residence is in a renowned garden in Suzhou, now part of a World Heritage Site.

The young Pei was educated in China before moving to the United States at age 18 to study architecture at the University of Pennsylvania. He received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from MIT in 1940. He is a 1940 recipient of the Alpha Rho Chi Medal, the MIT Traveling Fellowship, and the AIA Gold Medal. He then studied at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and received a Master's degree in 1946. He was a member of the Harvard faculty and received the Wheelwright Traveling Fellowship in 1951. In 1954, he became a naturalized American citizen.

In 1948, William Zeckendorf hired Pei to work on many large-scale architectural and planning projects across the country. Pei founded his own architectural firm in 1955, which was originally known as I. M. Pei and Associates. In 1989, it became Pei Cobb Freed & Partners, recognizing JAMES INGO FREED and Henry N. Cobb.

Pei was the design principal on a number of significant buildings, most notable being the Grand Louvre, the Bank of China Tower, the Javitz Convention Center and the East Building of the National Gallery of Art in Washington. He designed major museums in Berlin, Athens, Luxembourg, Boston and Syracuse, among others.

I. M. Pei is a member of too many architectural organizations to list them all here, and he has been honored in this country, France and China. In 1990, Pei retired from his firm but still maintains an office there. He has four children, two of them CHIEN CHUNG (DIDI) PEI and Li Chung (Sandi) Pei, are architects at their own firm.

