

## Seven artists awarded State Department Medal of Arts for cultural diplomacy

By **Peggy McGlone** January 21, 2015

Architect Maya Lin and portraitist Kehinde Wiley are among the seven artists to be honored with the 2014 Department of State-Medal of Arts for their efforts to promote cultural understanding through art.

U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry will award the medals to Lin, Wiley, Xu Bing, Mark Bradford, Sam Gilliam, Julie Mehretu and Pedro Reyes at a luncheon Wednesday at the State Department.

The artists are being saluted for their commitment and contribution to the State Department's Art in Embassies program, a private-public diplomatic effort that uses visual art to promote cross-cultural understanding and collaboration.

Created in 2012, the biennial award is given to artists who have been instrumental in promoting "creativity, collaboration and understanding in support of American diplomacy," according to the State Department.

Art in Embassies was founded by the Museum of Modern Art in 1953 before becoming a part of the Department of State in 1963. Since its inception, it has engaged more than 20,000 artists in 190 countries around the world.

In its first year, the Medal of Arts was awarded to Carrie Mae Weems, Jeff Koons, Cai Guo-Qiang, Shahzia Sikander and Kiki Smith.

---

Peggy McGlone joined the Washington Post in 2014 as its local arts reporter. Prior to that, she covered the arts for The Star-Ledger in New Jersey for more than a decade.

---

### The Post Recommends

#### **Teachers are using theater and dance to teach math – and it's working**

A study found that educators trained in integrating art into math lessons saw better test results from students.