

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Maya Angelou: Still She Rises

Chiwan Choi · Wednesday, May 28th, 2014

When I reached to old friend and exceptional poet [Ama Birch](#) about writing a piece on Maya Angelou's passing, she sent me this short piece. It's not what I was looking for, since I was thinking more of a personal essay, but reading it, the simplicity of the poem says it all:

Maya

What a life!
What a voice!
Her echoes remain
floating in the air now.

The impact Maya Angelou has had on us goes beyond the craft of poems, of course, not being relegated merely in the world of writing or literature. As a historian, an educator, an activist, and above all, as a human being, she moved people in a profound way. In the best episode of [Iconoclasts](#) that I ever saw, Maya met with Dave Chapelle, who had just returned from his journey to Africa, a trip that began soon after he stunned the world by [walking away from *The Chapelle Show* and the \\$50 million contract](#) he'd signed with Comedy Central.

In this segment, they speak to each other about the power of words, about the courage to love, Maya calls him her "grandson," and at the end, leaves Dave Chappelle in tears.

[embedvideo id="QaCgtNKqb7E" website="youtube"]

I become teary every time I see this clip.

Of course, there is her poetry, too. And as we say goodbye, let's remember her voice, her words, speaking "Still I Rise."

[embedvideo id="JqOqo50LSZ0? website="youtube"]

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