

PHENOMENAL WOMAN - MAYA ANGELOU



We celebrate the life of a truly phenomenal woman Maya Angelou, who passed away at age 86. Her journey was extra ordinary! No matter what obstacles were thrown her way she shone like a star and was dignified. Maya Angelo was noted for her literary skills and more so her civil rights movements as an activist. Her controversial book "**I know why the Caged Bird Sings**" is her autobiography growing up in the deep rural segregated South and the hardships she overcame and the strength she drew from those experiences – one of her famous quotes coming out of that experience is "the bird doesn't sing because it has an answer – it sings because it has a song" – imploring that each person deserves the right to be heard and demand it.

In 2013 at The Associated Press she stated "**I'm not modest, I have no modesty. Modesty is a learned behavior. But I do pray for humility, because humility comes from the inside out.**" This phenomenal woman truly epitomizes taking her basket of lemons and making lemonade! Her tall regal and unforgettable voice would rapture you as she always had something meaningful to say.

Maya truly had a colourful journey but her experiences only made her the stronger for it – she lived for several years in Egypt and Ghana, where she met Nelson Mandela, and thereafter Malcolm X, to whom she remained close to until his assassination, in 1965. Three years thereafter, she was assisting Dr. Martin Luther King to organize the Poor People's March in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was also assassinated, coincidentally on Maya's 40th birthday.

This phenomenal woman overcame being a rape victim from age 7 and never spoke for several years and it was through literature she poured herself; and by age 9 she wrote her very first poem.

This beloved woman has inspired so many media moguls such as Oprah Winfery and Toni Morrison. She has graced the corridors of The White House where she recited "**On the Pulse of the Morning**" at President Bill Clinton's first inauguration in 1993 and "**Amazing Peace**," in 2005 at President George W. Bush's Christmas tree lighting ceremony. This wonderful icon best said it;

**"They try so much But they can't touch My inner mystery.
When I try to show them, They say they still can't see.
I say, It's in the arch of my back, The sun of my smile,
The ride of my breasts, The grace of my style.
I'm a woman Phenomenally.
Phenomenal woman,
That's me.**