



Mike Shinoda

Mike grew up in California to a Japanese American father and a European American mother. As a child, he loved to paint and studied classical piano since age six. He eventually branched out to jazz and hip-hop before picking up the guitar. Mike was asked to be part of a youth musical theater, but he was worried because of a solo part. After working with the director to rewrite the songs in a way that was authentic to his voice, he performed on stage and was transformed by the experience. In college, Mike obtained a degree in graphic design and illustration while continuing to pursue his love of music. When in high school he co-founded the rap rock, alternative metal, and electronica band that would eventually become Linkin Park in 1996. He was the co-lead vocalist, songwriter, and producer. The path for Linkin Park was tough. After forty-four rejections from record labels, they finally got a record deal with Warner Bros. Records and was launched to stardom with their debut album *Hybrid Theory* (2000). Music helped Mike rise to fame and also helped him to explore his identity as a Japanese American and other social issues. He formed a side project called "Fort Minor" in 2004 that focused on his hip-hop background with tracks bringing awareness to Japanese American internment during World War II. When his bandmate died, Mike publicly shared his experience and became an advocate for mental health support and acceptance. He also fights to protect the environment and with his band Linkin Park, they founded "Music for Relief" in 2005 to help victims of natural disasters. Mike still uses art and painting to express himself.

Note: Some songs listed might have explicit content; listener discretion advised.