

## Impact Statement

Dayvis Muralles Merida, Grade 12.

***Astro's Enlightenment***, 2023.

Acrylic on canvas, 24 x 20 inches.

Plainfield Academy for the Arts and Advanced Studies, Plainfield, NJ

Unsung Hero: Gene Shoemaker

In the search for my Unsung hero Geno Shoemaker, I'd rely heavily on the pre-approved unsung hero list. It took a long amount of time until I chose my unsung hero, I am very picky, and I have sporadic moments of Inspiration where I would favor one hero over another and so forth. I originally had design ideas about a more natural setting and creating beautiful scenery based on my unsung hero's background. My ideal hero would have been a botanist, but another idea had surfaced. I eventually asked one of my friends to help me look through the list of heroes and Gene Shoemaker's name appeared. The final piece that went into my decision was to research Gene shoemaker; In researching him I began to be inspired with his dedication to his studies.

As said previously it was his dedication and passion towards the field, he would pioneer Astrogeology. His passion towards geology developed at an early point in his youth and shoemaker would continue to pursue until his death. An aspect that I want to express is the idea that he enlightened the world of the moon's geology and further our understanding of the solar system and further beyond. His act of preparing our astronauts with the mapping of the moon, who then would later land on the moon was and is invaluable to the growth of human knowledge. Knowledge that has been continuously passed down, knowledge that is ultimately larger than himself.

My artwork expresses this idea of enlightenment, having gene shoemaker being enlightened already and therefore enlightening those who come after. It's partly inspired by the Creation of Adam in which Adam and God leave a gap between their hands symbolizing the gap between God and humans. The gap that I would portray is filled by a light, this light is a representation of Shoemaker's knowledge. In "The Creation of Adam" the gap signifies the distance between God and human, In whatever I decide to name my project the gap is instead replaced with a connection between Gene Shoemaker and the placeholder for any person wanting to learn. There was an idea floating that I should make Gene shoemaker be coming out the moon kind of attached to it. The basis for this idea was his physical and mental connection as his remains are on the moon and he is attached to the understanding of the moon. One more small detail I had included was how both figures were portrayed, Gene Shoemaker on the side of the moon that is visible while the astronaut would have been in the dark side further defining the idea of Gene Shoemaker enlightening us, taking us out of the dark and exposing the light.

The process of creating this artwork has had me change my understanding of how there is more than my own understanding of things. That we didn't just one day have this information, someone dedicated their precious life to understanding the geology of astrological structures. I've taken for granted the convenience of obtaining information as most of the youth in my

generation have without understanding the hardships it took to know and understand these concepts.