

## Impact Statement

Elinor Kaplan, Grade 7.  
***The View Within***, 2020.  
Sculpture, 16 x 7 x 18 Inches.  
LaVilla School of the Arts, Jacksonville, FL  
Unsung Hero: Dorothea Lange

I was interested in doing a project on a photographer because I had an idea in mind already about making a camera and using it as a way to show photographs. I chose Dorothea Lange because she is a thoughtful photographer, and she uses her art to demonstrate truth. Every single detail in her photos is carefully thought out. We know this because we can see how many photos she took of each subject, with large and small details changed: how the subjects are positioned, what they are looking at, what angle she is at when she takes the photo. She's a thoughtful photographer.

She used her portraits to show the truth about people and events. According to a documentary on Lange, she lived in New York and saw the tremendous diversity of the Lower East Side and became a photographer to capture it. She had a chance to become a successful businesswoman taking portraits of wealthy people to do work that mattered. She was hired to take pictures of migrant workers for a social scientist documenting labor camp. She sent her two most special photographs from the migrant camps at the end of her travels to the San Francisco News. The photographs were so moving that over \$200,000 in contributions came to the newspaper and went to the most desperate cases of the migrant workers. Two months after Pearl Harbor Day in 1941, hired by the War Relocation Authority, she photographed Japanese internment camps, although the government impounded her photographs for 30 years when they were finally released and showed the injustice done to American citizens.

I wanted to represent a gallery because at the end of her life, she was honored with a retrospective of her work at the Museum of Modern Art, the 5th photographer and the only woman to be offered that chance at the time. Gathering and selecting her photographs was the last thing she did, and she did not survive to see the opening of the exhibition. I put the gallery inside the camera because everything she did was through a camera. I made it so you can look in through the top and through the front lens. Inside, I put people on the bench inside to represent the impact she had on people who saw her photographs. I put her most eye-opening photographs on the wall inside my gallery to show her most important work.

I did not expect a photographer to be able to change people's lives. Art is more than just landscapes and faces. It can show people things they would not ordinarily see and show them what is really happening. It also has the power to move people to action, like those who contributed to the welfare of the migrant workers. Photography was the perfect medium to make such important statements about truth because unlike other arts, they are less imaginative and more representations of a view of what is actually there. She was able to recognize powerful stories in what she saw, and she used her skills to enhance the truth and then release it into the world.