

Impact Statement

Mary Rozier, Grade 9.

The Fight for Civil Rights Continues, 2021.

Colored pencil and graphite on paper, 12 x 18 Inches.

Eagles Landing High School, McDonough, GA

Unsung Hero: Sheyann Webb

Who is Sheyann Webb? Some may know her as an author; some may know her as that small girl marching with Martin Luther King Jr., But I know Sheyann Webb to be a hero. I know her to be a freedom fighter. I know her to be a person to look fear dead in the eyes and say, come for me! Sheyann is not some hero that wears a cape, a mask and flies around the city to save people. Not all heroes wear capes. This hero wore a bun and moved the world with her words and actions.

What I find inspirational about Sheyann Webb is her courage. She had the spirit of marching with over 3,200 people on the train to Montgomery, knowing the odds were against her. Police were beating and killing, but she kept marching on. Why is this? It's because she had a vision. She had a mission to get freedom for all! And for sure known fact, she wasn't going to let anyone or anything stand in her way.

In my artwork, I wanted to display how the fight for freedom continues today. I showed an African American boy gazing upon my Sheyann Webb painting. This painting includes the trauma of police officers and their dogs tormenting many African American people on Bloody Sunday. This is one of the many events that started the journey to continue to fight for freedom.

My work expresses Sheyann's character and heroic acts by mentioning the statements "built with courage" and "smallest freedom fighter." Also, I included her as a child shouting one of the phrases Martin Luther King Jr. said while they were marching, standing in front of the Edmund Pettus Bridge.

How I creatively designed my artwork was by displaying her image in front of the Edmund Pettus Bridge as a piece of art in a museum. People put art in a museum for others to learn and enjoy, and I want the world to educate themselves on this Unsung hero and see what she has done, and see what she has given up for our rights. Using my graphite and shading techniques, I grasped her facial expression of her shouting out. This one part of the artwork makes you feel like you're right with her, fighting for freedom.

Creating my artwork has changed my outlook on life because it allows me to realize that African American people are still not free. We may be free from slavery, but the impact is still there. We are not free from social injustice. We are not free from racial slurs and disrespect. But all of this will change. My artwork will positively impact the audience, and viewers can appreciate what this small but mighty freedom fighter has done. Artwork like this will act as a stepping stone to bring us all together as the fight for freedom continues.