

Impact Statement

Ian Pomeroy, Grade 12.

Moche Kraus: A Lesson in Literary Stealth, 2017.

Mixed media sculpture, 43 x 22 x 16.5 Inches.

Hugoton High School, Hugoton, KS

Unsung Hero: Moche Kraus

Moche Kraus was a man befitting of the term "inspiration". Despite everything he faced, he still carried on like it was his second nature. Bravery was in no short supply during the 1940s however, facing not only Nazi Germany, but the Swiss government was more than extraordinary. Kraus began writing passports for Jewish citizens in Nazi Germany to get them out of the country and into others, the total people he was able to sneak through was considered the greatest rescue operation of all time coming down between forty and one hundred thousand Jewish citizens by most accounts. His willingness to make things work despite proposed opposition and his selflessness is a great standing stone to me personally. Words are not only there to add flavor to life, they are there to protect people and even guide them to better things. Kraus, as stated before, wrote passports into Switzerland without the "OK" from the government. However, Switzerland turned a blind eye to all of these people entering the country. Switzerland accepted them in with good faith, letting Kraus become a sort of savior to everyone despite how very behind the curtain he was.

My vision behind this piece was to show Kraus' willingness to overcome and even go beyond what he had promised. I wanted to show a certain emotion in that there was so much defiance from Kraus' ideas alone to Nazi Germany. Despite the how imposing the Nazi party was on the people, Kraus still crafted a way to express freedom. Hence why the centerpiece is two books, something to focus on. His time was short in that he had to find ways for people to get out and fast, so he devised clever tactics to deliver his passports. To show how crafty Kraus had become, I wanted to show off that with adding small details where I could that may often go over looked, this was on purpose. Not every intention is clear cut and understood. Mostly intentions from people are very subtle, almost completely invisible.

The imagery I chose, of course, focuses around the books and the hands. These were important I feel in showing that all you needed to make the largest impact was two hands and some ideas. Ideology comes in fascinating forms, most of them will forever stay ingrained in someone's minds, so the problem soon became: "How do I make something that instills a clear picture of aptitude and forward thinking?" I needed something large, something that showed resolution in the face of opposition and the harsh and dark presence of a force so terrifyingly powerful that it took the entire world to stand against it. At first, it was a stair step, then it became a train station, and finally, it became a platform of literature. Most people often overlook books, their ink and words easily burned away by fire or even decayed by time. However, it is still at the utmost importance, because so long as ideas and the ability to write exist, individuality cannot become obsolete. Standing at the forefront of every history lesson will be writing, words and ideas.