

Impact Statement

Xue Ying Liu, Grade 12.

His Hopes and Dreams, 2016.

Watercolor on paper, 20 x 15 Inches.

Downtown Magnets High School, Los Angeles, CA

Unsung Hero: Pavel Weiner

During a time of darkness and terror, Pavel Weiner was a Holocaust survivor who spent his childhood growing up away from his family and friends in the Terezin Ghetto. In the Terezin Ghetto, Pavel lived in a room with forty other boys who were forbidden to go to school or leave the room. Though Pavel was not allowed to go to school and get an education, he was an extremely intelligent boy who valued learning. And through his diaries, Pavel kept a daily entry about his life while living in the ghetto.

Before the Terezin Ghetto, Pavel lived a normal life doing his favorite activities, going to concerts, museums, and traveling. But Pavel's lack of freedom in the ghetto did not stop him from continuing his studies. While being secluded in the ghetto, Pavel learned many different languages as well as math, history, and geography. Pavel would even pay for education through scraps of food to learn to play the piano.

Though life was difficult, Pavel Weiner and the boys created the Neshar magazine where Pavel and the boys would identify themselves as Nesharims, eagles. Through the magazine Pavel expressed his emotions and pain as well as hopes for a better future, a world that does not include chaos and terror but peace.

Although Pavel Weiner was young and had to conquer life living harshly, Pavel has given me encouragement after learning about his brave and inspirational story. Though Pavel was unable to do his favorite activities and get an education, Pavel continued to find ways to continue what he enjoys doing. He made me realize how I should not take the education I am given for granted but to embrace this opportunity and learn so I can gain wisdom.

While many people would give up while times are hard, Pavel continued to believe and hope for a better future. Through difficult times, Pavel would persevere and live courageously. Pavel's optimism and perseverance inspires me to have belief and faith. Pavel taught me that although sometimes life can be hard, through time and faith, difficult times could easily be conquered. At such a young age Pavel contains much wisdom and should receive respect for his optimism and belief in the world.

In my drawing I wanted to depict hope during a suffocating journey. So I drew a boy in which represents Pavel. In the drawing Pavel is drowning and suffocating in the waters while he is reaching out for help. Pavel's suffocation in the waters represents his suffering while he is forced to leave his family and friends and moved to the Terezin Ghetto. While drowning, an eagle flies over which represents the Nesharim boys. The Nesharim boys represent faith, hope, and an ending towards Pavel Wiener's suffocation.

Above the water is a landscape containing mountains, trees, a road, and a train. The landscape above represents Pavel's peace but the train that was painted overlapping his arm represents Pavel's fear. During the Holocaust Pavel expressed his fear for transportation through his magazines. So the painted train overlapping the boy's arm was painted to frighten Pavel's hopes and dreams but Pavel's arm continues to reach out which shows Pavel's perseverance. Above the waters is a quote that was once said by Pavel Weiner, "I wonder if I'll ever see them again." The blurred quote above the water reveals Pavel's fear from losing his family and friends after the suffocating journey.