



Impact Statement

Bella Tan, Grade 7

Curt Lowens: Holding On While the World Burns, 2026

Colored pencil, graphite, marker on paper, 14 x 11 inches

Luckie Art Studio, Lexington, MA

Unsung Hero: Curt Lowens

Curt Lowens's life story sounds like something straight out of a Hollywood movie, which is fitting, given that he eventually became a prolific actor. I chose him because his story showed me the power of resistance and action in times of darkness. Curt Lowens was in his teens when he escaped deportation, hiding in the Netherlands with his family. While he was there, he worked as a member of the Dutch Resistance, where he saved around 150 children and personally rescued two American airmen. This act was later commended by General Eisenhower. Lowen's journey came full circle when he worked as a British army translator, and arrested the very Nazi generals that had once tried to hunt him down. And despite all of the distress that was caused from the Holocaust and the loss of his mother in war, Lowens started a successful acting career in Hollywood, often playing the role of villains that he had fought against. Lowens embodies the righteousness of those who refused to stay silent while others were in danger.

During the Holocaust, Curt Lowens altered the lives of hundreds of people through his relentless acts of bravery and commitment to human rights and safety. His impact is most clearly seen in the thousands of people alive today after he saved many Jewish children from the Holocaust. By hiding these children and moving them to safety, he ensured that they would continue to live to grow up and potentially have children and grandchildren of their own, ensuring that family lines were not wiped out. He also played a crucial role in the aftermath of the war, and in his later years, using his personal history to help others. By sharing his story in schools and museums, he turned his survival into a lesson for the world. Not only did he talk about the past, he inspired people to see that they also have the power to protect those in need. By doing this, he made sure his message of bravery and justice would live on long into the future. He showed us that the greatest way of honoring the past is by protecting the future.

My vision behind this piece was to show Lowens's story, from beginning to end. So I based my art around the Star of David, symbolizing how Curt Lowens fought for the wellbeing and liberties of Jewish people during the Holocaust. In each of the six triangles, I showed a snapshot of Lowens's life and the messages he sent as a hero, from saving children, to symbols of hope. In the hexagon at the center of the star, I drew Lowens holding two children, showing his determination to help the many people in peril. Even in times that were seemingly hopeless, Curt Lowens was one of the many people who took action and helped motivate and inspire the public. And lastly for the background, I decided to show how chaos eventually comes to an end

and it is people like Lowens that help speed it up. I drew an explosion scene at the bottom with Lowens, once again, leading many children away from it to safety. This gradually fades into a nice sunset with two doves flying in the sky, to symbolize peace and purity in Lowens's heart, and to give the viewer a sense of hope, in contrast to the rest of the piece. In this way, I think I was able to capture most of the full picture of who Curt Lowens was and what he did.

To conclude, I believe that Curt Lowens's actions have definitely inspired me. He's shown me that an individual's choices can define the lives of thousands. Although I might not make a worldly impact like he did, I know that I can be a smaller version of him in my everyday life. Before, I've always been scared to stand up for others, believing that it isn't my business, but Lowens's story has made me want to move from being a passive observer to someone who fights in the face of injustice. He also showed me that you are never too young or too powerless to help others. His legacy challenges us to look beyond our own comfort and care for others, even when it's difficult. He's taught us that we all have the duty to protect those who are in danger, and I hope that the people who look at my artwork take away the same message that I have.