



Impact Statement

Cecilia Hou, Grade 8

***The Multifaced Woman: Beauty and Brains*, 2026**

Acrylic, colored pencil, and gouache painting on canvas board, 12 x 16 inches

Jericho Middle School, Jericho, NY

Unsung Hero: Hedy Lamarr

Before participating in the ARTEFFECT competition, I was unaware of the true impact of Hedy Lamarr. When my teacher introduced the competition and shared a list of unsung heroes, I was excited to see her name included. This gave me the opportunity to learn more about her and share what I discovered creatively through my artwork.

Through my research, my admiration for Hedy Lamarr grew, as she proves a person should not be seen just for their looks, as someone can have both beauty and brains. Hedy Lamarr was a Hollywood actress during the 1930s and 1940s, often nicknamed "world's most beautiful woman." Beyond her beauty she had some character traits that I admired including her curiosity at a young age. Furthermore, she had a very strong personality and didn't waver, her inner strength helped her realize that marriage was not the best for her as it held her back from what she wanted to do, which wasn't a common notion at the time.

Once she began to date a successful pilot called Howard Hughes, he helped her uncover a potential no one knew she had. Hughes gifted her a small set of equipment to use in her trailer on set, she would work on inventions in between takes. He had once told her "You're a genius" as she combined the fastest fish and bird wings to sketch a new type of wings for Hughes' airplane. She had created other inventions like a tablet that dissolves into water creating a coca cola like substance. However, her most notable achievement was when she co-invented a frequency hopping communication system with George Antheil, which would have a tremendous impact on naval warfare during World War II. Her invention would interfere with the enemy's radio waves, with both transmitter and receiver hopping to new frequencies together. Thus, allowing the torpedo to find its intended target. However, the military initially denied this creation. She was later on recognized for her contributions and became the first woman to receive the Invention Convention's Bulbie Gnass Spirit of Achievement award. In addition, her invention would later serve as a blueprint for modern technology like WiFi, GPS, and Bluetooth. Ultimately, this earned her the nickname "Mother of Wi-Fi."

My artistic vision was to display how she was both a successful Hollywood actress and very intelligent. I showed her complex and revolutionary inventions through original sketches from her notebook. I also incorporated her work in the background showing her complex system she invented. I added multiple faces from scenes from her movies that she played in like "Samson and Delilah." I used gouache to do most coloring on the skin and clothes, to make a more smooth and defined effect. I then used acrylic for smaller details like the background base color

and writing. Finally, I used color pencils to deepen the details and make it more realistic. I drew her as a strong confident facial expression to show her confidence and how she would not waver.

Hedy Lamarr's story influences my actions in life by teaching me to not waver and not let anyone tell me what I can and can't do. Also, she proves that it is possible to be both beautiful and smart. Not only that, but her story also proves that a person should not just be seen for what's on the outside. I hope to show my art to friends and family as I am proud and believe this was very outside my comfort zone, creating an opportunity for more growth in my art skills.