Seraph’s Simple Act

Jane Wilson
I was drawn to the women’s suffrage movement because of its impact on our world today. 2020 marked the 150th anniversary of America’s first female vote, cast by Seraph Young in Utah. That day made history, immortalizing the effort of countless other women beforehand, coming together to achieve a common goal. Speaking up and advocating for what we know we deserve has been, and will continue to be, a historical struggle. However, anything is possible if we work together and fight for it long and hard enough. Recognizing the efforts and successes of women who came before us brings inspiration, appreciation, and determination to continue progressing towards the equality we deserve.

Similar to the fight for women’s representation in politics, has been the fight for female representation in the arts. Throughout much of history, women have been the muse, but rarely the artist. Masters in the arts have nearly always been male—not for lack of skill from female artists—but largely due to patriarchal systems and stigmas long embedded in society. My piece represents femininity from all aspects: subject matter, artist, context, and style. As I have explored within this piece, the only way to break the barriers of the status quo is to support each other’s success, and stick together to increase our power. I used this concept for the basis of my piece. Although Seraph may have been the pinnacle of the fight by casting her ballot first, we cannot forget the countless hands and hearts that contributed to making that happen.

Understanding the importance of sharing all perspectives, especially in creative work, is the solution to many of the problems in our world today. Women are an important part of that. I am passionate about this, which is why I strive to communicate a feminine perspective through my art. I understand that art has the power to change perspectives in a way that no other form of communication can, and it has been my goal to learn how to best do that. Communicating through images allows the viewer to feel emotions, which connect them to the experiences of others and bypass the limits of written and spoken language. The more connected we feel as women, the more confident
we are that we are significant, and that we deserve to be represented in creative fields and all else.

This piece has been viewed by thousands of people: displayed in the Utah Capital for two months, in an online gallery by the state of Utah, in the 2021 Provo Freedom Festival magazine which was distributed to many households in Utah county, in the Utah County Administration Building, and on the @betterdays2020 Instagram account, which has nearly 4,000 followers. It has truly been my privilege to have its message so widespread, and I am hopeful that it has encouraged female artists both young and old, to have confidence in themselves and their creative abilities.