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Karla Gomez-Pelayo & Jenn Jovez, Wings of Resistance, 5' x 5', mixed medium sculpture.

Wings of Resistance

Karla Gomez-Pelayo and Jenn Jovez

Wings of Resistance started out as a class art project and developed into a broader symbol of solidarity for our undocumented community on campus.

As artists and allies of pro-migrant art and of our undocumented communities, we created Wings of Resistance to cultivate our own creativity and in solidarity with our undocumented brothers and sisters. The butterfly symbolizes migration as a natural phenomenon; it therefore became our symbol of solidarity, hope and resistance. Art becomes a powerful way to impart social change to and transcend borders when the country finds itself at a crossroads regarding comprehensive immigration reform.

Our process began with a wooden skeleton frame mounted on a circular base. After gathering input from fellow artists and doing research, we gathered hundreds of issues of the Daily Californian, rolled them up into compressed paper balls, and began shaping the sculpture. We used “chicken wire” to help mold and maintain the wing shapes in place. We covered the wire with layers of duct tape followed by layers of paper maché and finally layers of plaster to create a hard surface that could withstand movement. Like the strength and courage of those who cross bodies of water, other countries, and borders in their journey to the United States for better opportunities or to provide food on the table for their families, our butterfly took many transformative stages. After numerous layers of paint and hours of labor and love, a life-sized monarch butterfly stood boldly before our eyes. Wings of Resistance had come to life.

We used Mod Podge to mount the names of local and national support groups, organizations, and resources for undocumented students. We also printed and added legislation, news articles, student testimonials, and photographs of courageous acts of civil disobedience. *Wings of Resistance* is an informative and political piece. It is a tribute to how immigration has impacted our lives and those close to us. It is made with intentionality, consciousness, and love.