Art for Dialogue
From Darkness to Light/Ex Umbris Ad Lucem

Participatory arts, which use the senses as a means for creating something together, provide innovative ways for people to become involved in their community. Combining art and dialogue draws attention to what connects us, which can be overlooked in the busyness of our day-to-day lives. Art and dialogue also foster creative thinking about the challenges we face, both individually and as a community.

The goal of this year’s Art for Dialogue project is to foster a deeper understanding of a liberal arts education by exploring the University’s motto: Ex Umbris Ad Lucem.
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This fall participants shared their learning experiences in words both spoken and written, and through visual representations. These included experiences such as beliefs that no longer ring true, facts that changed the way one thinks, or behaviors in which one no longer engages. Students first shared and reflected on their stories with each other and then wrote about these moments.

The reflections were then placed in boxes, which function as visual metaphors for the transition from darkness into light. The variety of shapes and sizes also served as metaphors: the small ring boxes might contain a jewel of an insight while those large enough to hold household appliances suggest an idea that takes up a lot of space in one’s life or a learning experience with public implications.

An array of materials including chains, yarn, string, wire, ribbon, nails, stickers, three-dimensional toy animals, natural objects, and markers were used to visually and materially depict the journey from a place of not knowing (darkness) into knowledge (light). Some participants also attached tags with text on the outside of the boxes or agreed to videotaped interviews.

This year’s project was developed by Joni Doherty, Zan Goncalves, Heather Tullio, Fred Rogers, and visiting artist Christine Destrempes. Approximately 400 students in twenty-three courses (including Composition I, Introduction to Media Production, Introduction to American Studies, and Integrated Sciences), are participating.
Celebration!

The boxes will be used to create a room-sized installation that serves as the foundation for a multi-media celebration. Videos of the interviews created by Mass Communication students will be shown, along with music, dance, and theatre performances that represent in various ways the metaphor of *Ex Umbris Ad Lucem*.

**Thursday, November 15, 6:00 p.m.**
Spagnuolo Hall
Franklin Pierce University
Rindge NH 03461

The program is free and open to the public.