

Houston Baptist University

Indistinct Visions of Divided Wings

Art: *Wings*

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## Indistinct Visions of Divided Wings

A step into the *Get Ready* exhibition hosted in the University Academic Center unveils walls lined with creative works of art

box, some of them slightly chipped, all encased in a resin sheet for protection. They're placed on top of a silk sheet, creating a bold contrast between the vivid orange wings and the sheet's white backdrop. There is a hidden light in the upper left corner illuminating the inside of the box b

monarchs' bodies, leaving the now wingless butterflies to die in misery. Such an act is reminiscent of butterfly collections as collectors would kill butterflies by pinning them to a board for display, the eerie likeness emphasized even more with their similar appearance to the artwork. The viewers should not worry, however; no butterflies were harmed in the making of this art piece. These wings belong to butterflies that were dying from a disease and were humanely euthanized through freezing, a method that puts the butterfly into painless sleep, in order to protect the other monarchs from a disease outbreak. Novak confirmed that he was in contact with associations that raise butterflies, and after seeing he was an artist, they offered to donate the wings for any use (Novak, 2:20-2:30).

Novak is an amazing artist who presented butterfly wings in such extraordinary ways that people who come across them may start to look at monarchs differently, as precious living works of art. It's hopeful that these artworks may start to bring awareness to the monarch butterfly especially as of late since its population has been dwindling. Monarchs have been decreasing at an alarming rate, around 90% over the past two decades, for various reasons such as severe climate change and loss of habitat (Mizejewski, par. 1-2). Organizations have been pushing for environmental education through monarch-based programs and projects, covering children and adults across regions to develop a necessary understanding of monarch conservation, as any environmental challenge is best faced with combined effort (Oberhauser, pg. 6). Many programs use such strategies to combat the population decline: fighting against the use of pesticides that kills insects and poisons plants, growing habitats that can raise monarchs, and most importantly, raising awareness about the issue so more people can help. The goodness of this artwork revealing the beauty and fragility of monarch butterflies shines when the viewers appreciate it and develop interest in the monarch butterflies' survival.

## Works Cited

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