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## Where Light Silently Falls

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*Linfield College*

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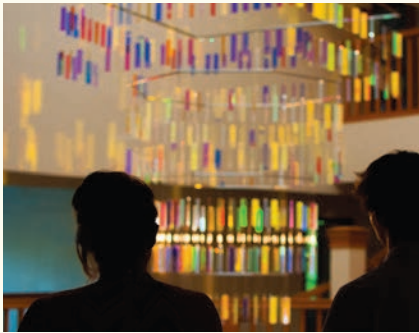
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# Where light silently falls



Growing up on the south coast of England, artist Martin Richman found himself fascinated by light. How the light interacted with the water at the beach or became muted by clouds and mist. The lighting in the synagogue as rays of sun entered through colored glass. And the lamps that illuminated the promenade along the beach and led to the frenetic lighting of the “fun fair,” a kind of carnival.

“Light and illumination was an important part of all of that,” Richman said. “So, for me there’s a fairly rich mix of the dark side, which was the fun fair where it was a bit sort of boisterous and kind of violent and dangerous... and the somewhat spiritual realm of the synagogue.”

Now Richman, an internationally acclaimed London-based artist, is shedding a new light on the atrium of Walker Hall. A large-scale, three-dimensional piece he created was finished at the end of August. Entitled “Where Light Silently Falls,” the piece was commissioned specifically for the space and is made of 522 acrylic blades coated in dichroic film, suspended from the atrium skylight, and drops down 30 feet into the space below.

“I quite liked holding on to something that had to do with this octagonal well of light and I was interested in the skylights,” Richman said. “There is this idea that learning can be an infusion of light into one’s life and possibilities of life chances.”

The display captures the natural light from above and reflects it off the blades, creating the appearance of different colors in varying degrees of saturation and intensity. The light and appearance of the blades change depending on the angle from which the piece is viewed and the time of day.

Richman’s work has won numerous awards and he has been commissioned by organizations including the British Broadcasting Corp. and the International Olympic Committee. His work appears in places like Barcelona, Birmingham, Brussels, Dublin, London, Milan, New York, Paris, San Antonio and Venice. And, now, McMinnville.

The artwork is made possible by a generous donation from Beverly and Peter Richardson. Peter, professor of German at Linfield since 1980, was named Oregon Professor of the Year in 2009 and is a member of the Department of Modern Languages, housed in Walker Hall. The Richardsons have always been drawn to artistic spaces.

“The academic departments housed in Walker Hall all represent international studies in one way or another, and we have wanted to showcase art as an essential signature of cultures throughout the world,” said Peter. “We believe that our best work, our best thinking, our most meaningful engagement with the world and our most fulfilling moments are enhanced in creative spaces.”

The commission was overseen by Marit Berning ’15, former Linfield College curator-in-residence, who worked closely with both the artist and the Richardsons throughout the process.

– Kevin Curry ’92

