

Press Release

For immediate Release
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Museum of Sonoma County Presents 25th Annual “Día de los Muertos” Exhibition and Free Family Festival

October 16-November 7, 2021

(SANTA ROSA, CA)- September 29, 2021– The Museum of Sonoma County (MSC) is pleased to present its 25th annual “Día de los Muertos” (Day of the Dead) exhibition, on view from October 16 through November 7, 2021. This year’s anticipated exhibition will take place in the Museum’s historic 1910 Post Office building’s mezzanine gallery and will feature artwork and altars created by local artists, students, and collectors.

Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a joyous remembrance of the lives of family members and loved ones who have passed and a celebration of the cycle of life. The holiday is celebrated on November 1st and 2nd throughout Latin America, but is more closely associated with Mexico, where it originated. Traditionally, it is said, the souls of the dead return to visit the living for a few brief hours during the celebrations. In Mexico, cemeteries are cleaned and decorated, special food and candies are cooked, and home altars are designed with offerings (*ofrendas*) to the dead of the things they enjoyed most in life, including food, drink, and even music.

Artists featured in this year's exhibition include: Maria de Los Angeles, Tracy Ferron, Rubén Guzmán, Nathan Gomez, and Alejandro Salazar, with altars curated by Liz Camino-Byers, Israel Escudero Galeana, and the City of Santa Rosa’s Multicultural Roots Project. The exhibition will feature “An Overdue Requiem 20/21,” an exhibit sponsored and created by Camino-Byers, Galeana, and Salazar. “The years 2020 and 2021 were years of loss,” says the artist and altarista group. “Requiem’ is a prayer for the souls of the deceased, unfinished celebrations, and sudden goodbyes. Overdue, this requiem is a tribute to the souls who left without a holy burial and without a proper celebration of life.”

Maria de Los Angeles, the Santa Rosa artist now based out of New York, will be returning to her hometown to work with students from Luther Burbank Elementary School to create a mural for the exhibition. “Traditions give us a sense of place and a connection to our ancestors,” says de Los Angeles. “Through a workshop with school students, we will explore what Día de Los Muertos means to the young students and

their families. The workshop will culminate in a vertical community mixed media mural that will include 2D & 3D objects.” The collaboration with children is familiar to de Los Angeles, who worked with students from Luther Burbank Elementary School in 2019 to create artwork for her exhibition at Museum, “Tierra de Rosas: New Works by Maria de Los Angeles.”

Also making her return is artist Tracy Ferron of the organization “Life on Earth Art,” whose bold and stunning paper mâché winged heart installations have been highlights of past “Día de los Muertos” exhibitions. This year, she is inviting the community to participate in a series of heart-making workshops to create a display that will welcome visitors to the exhibition. “Life on Earth Art is delighted to collaborate with the community in creating the entrance to this year’s exhibit,” says Ferron. “El Vuelo de los Espíritus (The Flight of the Spirits)” features different sizes of cartonería winged hearts leading up the stairway to a large heart of collective remembrance. I am deeply drawn to the power of Día de los Muertos to help us transform our grief and loss into beauty and celebration. It is an honor to help facilitate this process through community artmaking and to be included in this year’s exhibit.” Dates and details for the free workshops are listed below.

New to the “Día de los Muertos” exhibition is Nathan Gomez, who is creating a large-scale painted canvas entitled “Reina Frida,” dedicated to the iconic artist. “Día de los Muertos is a historically significant celebration I always wanted to be a part of,” says Gomez. “Remembering the good times, enjoying, laughing, and sharing memories of those that have departed- I feel is essential to daily ritual. Within my pieces, I try to honor those same traditions.”

The exhibition will open on Saturday, October 16 with a free family festival from 12-4pm, featuring dance performances, art activities, and more. “The Museum is thrilled to be partnering with local artists and the broader community on the 25th annual ‘Día de los Muertos’ exhibition and family festival,” says Jeff Nathanson, MSC’s Executive Director and Curator of Art. “We are proud to celebrate Mexican and Latino heritage and we invite everyone to join us for this multicultural celebration.”

For more information, please visit our website: <https://museumsc.org/2021-dia-de-los-muertos/>.

Programs and Events

Opening Reception and Family Festival

Saturday, October 16, 2021

12:00-4:00pm

Join us as we celebrate the opening of our 25th annual “Día de los Muertos” exhibition with a free family festival! Enjoy fun art activities and a special performance by Paquiyollotzin, Ballet Folklorico of Petaluma!

Día de los Muertos Community Art Day (Life on Earth Art Workshops)

Saturday, September 25 and Sunday, October 3, 2021

12:00-4:00pm

Join Life on Earth Art to make a paper mâché winged heart in honor of your loved one for this year’s community altar. Participants are encouraged to include a memory or dedication to their loved one to display alongside their hearts, which will be displayed in the exhibition. For more information about Life on Earth Art, please visit

www.LifeOnEarthArt.com.

Additional programs to be added shortly.

Details and registration available on our website: www.museumsc.org/events.

About the Museum of Sonoma County

Located in Downtown Santa Rosa on Seventh Street between A and B Streets, the Museum of Sonoma County (MSC) presents exhibitions of modern and contemporary art and local and regional history. MSC is open year-round with changing exhibitions, public programs, school tours, and special events. MSC preserves and manages a regional art and history collection of over 18,000 objects, the region’s largest object documentation of Sonoma County’s history and culture.

Mission

The Museum of Sonoma County engages and inspires our diverse community with art and history exhibitions, collections, and public programs that are inclusive, educational, and relevant.

Smithsonian Affiliate

The Museum of Sonoma County has been a Smithsonian Affiliate since 2009. Smithsonian Affiliations establishes long-term partnerships with museums, education and cultural organizations to facilitate the loan of Smithsonian artifacts and traveling exhibitions, as well as to develop innovative educational collaborations locally and nationally. Created in 1996 by an act of the Smithsonian Board of Regents, the program is overseen by the Smithsonian’s Assistant Secretary for Education and Access and is one of the pillars of the Institution’s national outreach efforts. There are more than 200 Smithsonian Affiliates in nearly every state, Puerto Rico and Panama. Affiliates represent the diversity of America’s museum community—size, location and subject—and serve all audiences. More than 8,000 Smithsonian artifacts have been displayed at Affiliate locations for the past 20 years.

Museum of Sonoma County

Admission

425 Seventh Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
707-579-1500

www.museumsc.org

Museum Hours

(Current)

Open Thursday through Sunday

12:00-4:00pm

(Beginning October 13, 2021)

Open Wednesday through Sunday

11:00am-5:00pm

Closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, President's Day, Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas; please visit our website for additional closures.

Adults: \$10

Seniors, Students, Disabled: \$7

Museum Members: FREE

Children 12 & under: FREE

Images ([click here](#) to view and download)



Liz Camino-Byers, "Mother's Altar/Altar a la Madre," 2019 "Día de los Muertos" exhibition; image courtesy Museum of Sonoma County



Cartonería works by Rubén Guzmán, 2016 "Día de los Muertos" exhibition; image courtesy Museum of Sonoma County



Tracy Ferron, "At the Heart of It All: Righting the World," 2019 "Día de los Muertos" exhibition; image courtesy: Anet Hershey



Catrina by Álvaro de la Cruz & Family from the collection of Liz Camino-Byers, 2016 "Día de los Muertos" exhibition; image courtesy Museum of Sonoma County



Paquiyollotzin, Ballet Folclorico of Petaluma performing at 2019 "Día de los Muertos" Family Day; image courtesy Museum of Sonoma County



Visitors at the 2019 "Día de los Muertos" exhibition; image courtesy Museum of Sonoma County