

Press Release

For Immediate Release
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Images below



Museum of Sonoma County celebrates 2022 *Día de los Muertos*

October 1 – November 6, 2022

The Museum of Sonoma County is excited to announce its 26th *Annual Día de los Muertos* exhibition running from October 1 through November 6, 2022. This year's exhibition is presented in the Museum Sculpture Garden. Artists featured in this year's exhibition will be Peter Perez and Martín Zúñiga creating large scale installations, with altars designed and created by [Latino Service Providers, Extended Opportunity Programs & Services \(EOPS\)](#) at Santa Rosa Junior College, artist [Mario Uribe](#), and [Tracy Ferron](#). On the Museum's Family Festival, 12-4 PM Saturday, October 1, [Paquiyollotzin, Ballet Folklorico of Petaluma](#) will be performing in the Museum's parking lot. The *Día de los Muertos* Family Festival is sponsored by Santa Rosa Plaza, A Simon Mall.

In Mexico, *Día de los Muertos* is marked by festive celebrations to honor the deceased. Cemeteries are cleaned and decorated, special food and candies made, and home altars are designed with offerings (*ofrendas*) to the dead of the things they enjoyed most in life, including food, drink, and music. Traditionally, it is said that the souls of the dead return to visit the living for a few brief hours during the celebrations. This year's outdoor exhibition echoes the setting of many *Día de los Muertos* observances which often take place in cemeteries. "Conditions have changed the gathering of large crowds and collective cautions have been put in effect for everyone's safety. This created moving the *Día de los Muertos* exhibit to the Sculpture Garden, and back to original traditions of the celebrations [in] open air and nature," said Peter Perez, one of the two local artists featured in the exhibition.

The large-scale installations in the Sculpture Garden will feature works depicting oversized candles that illuminate at night, and a tree of life sculpture, both which are traditional and archetypal elements of *Día de los Muertos* iconography. The central installation, the Tree of Life by Peter Perez and the candles radiating out by Martín Zúñiga, will be surrounded by smaller community-created alters featuring many tradition and symbolic elements of the *Día de los Muertos* observance, interpreted through the lens of our own Sonoma County.

Día de los Muertos is a melding of traditions, Catholic and indigenous. Mexico's indigenous people preserved their traditions within the accepted practices of the colonial authority, sustaining them through the generations. What has been preserved across time is the message that death is a part of life, and the dead live on through our rituals of remembrance.

Artist Biographies

Peter Perez is a native of Los Angeles, California, and a graduate of the Art Center College of Design. He had a successful, fifty-year career as a Madison Avenue advertising art director and commercial designer. In 1976, he was selected by Art Direction Magazine as one of the best 700 advertising designers in America. After Returning to California in December of 1999, he dedicated himself to making Day of the Dead a national event. In 2000, he co-founded the Día de los Muertos in Petaluma and designed the presentations for the next nine years. He has been involved in the creation and promotion of Day of the Dead in the San Francisco Bay Area including at the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts. He also was involved in the first two years of the creation of the movie *Coco* (2017) with Pixar Animation. He has participated in the Museum of Sonoma County's *Día de los Muertos* exhibition for over 5 years and has been a Museum Teaching artist.

Martín Zúñiga, from Michoacan, Mexico, had his first introduction to the United States in these fields and is the product of this experience. An autodidact in work and art, Martín has learned his craft by doing. After the fields, Martín worked in construction, learning the skills he would soon transfer to his art – welding; framing; understanding the strength and qualities of wood, metal, paint, plasters, lighting. Martín's experience as a migrant, as an undocumented worker, as a Mexican American in the United States, as a man who speaks in an accented English, and as a target of undeserved police attention, shapes his art. However, his art claims and celebrates a new world, one that recognizes and honors his roots.

Martín completed a series of public art pieces in downtown Salinas (Central Coast) and downtown Selma (Central Valley), celebrating the cities' workers and their contributions to the unique character of small, rural cities. More recently, Martín has taught and led art workshops at the Museum of Sonoma County, the Restorative Justice Program, and in Roseland Unified Schools. He has participated in the Museum of Sonoma County's *Día de los Muertos* exhibition for over 6 years and has been a Museum Teaching Artist.

Programs and Events

Día de los Muertos Family Festival

12-4 PM Saturday, October 1

Join us as we celebrate the opening of our 26th annual *Día de los Muertos* exhibition with a **free** Family Festival! Enjoy fun art activities and a special performance by Paquiyollotzin, Ballet Folklórico of Petaluma! The Museum's annual *Día de los Muertos* exhibition features artwork and altars created by local artists, students, and community organizations. Sponsored by Santa Rosa Plaza, A Simon Mall.

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.

Museum of Sonoma County

425 Seventh Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
707-579-1500
www.museumsc.org

Hours

Wednesday-Sunday
11 AM 5PM

Admission

Adults: \$10.00
Seniors, Students, People with
Disabilities: \$7.00
Museum Members: FREE
Children 12 and under: FREE
EBT Card Holders: FREE
Reduced admission applies when one building is closed (Adults \$7, Seniors, Students, People with disabilities \$5)

Images ([click here](#) to view and **download hi-res images**)



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



Martin Zúñiga with his large-scale installation for 2020 *Día de los Muertos* exhibition; image courtesy Museum of Sonoma County



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



Peter Perez with his large-scale installation for 2020 *Día de los Muertos* exhibition; image courtesy Museum of Sonoma County