

# Dia de los Muertos

Celebrating Life





# Dia de los Muertos Explained

- <https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2020/10/05/ancient-origins-of-day-of-the-dead/>
- <https://www.ksat.com/news/2019/10/11/explained-dia-de-los-muertos-origins-and-history/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT0Q89itsOo>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sSawpU81cl&t=19s> (good)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lfkWV0QkwH4> (18 mins)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfw9Jb3oVjU> Catrina
- <https://rockwellmuseum.org/community-education/educators-students-programs/dia-de-los-muertos/> Good
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6VdNxCfPM> dia de los Muertos (use this)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbEbe4uzblE> (Spector)

# History of La Catrina

This face has a definite aesthetic: a skull, wearing a much-embroidered bonnet resplendent with flowers. This is *La Calavera Catrina* – the ‘elegant skull’ – often simply La Catrina. And however superficially festive it may appear, La Catrina's presence throughout Mexico's Day of the Dead mythology makes a much deeper statement of mortality, destiny and the societal divisions of class.

<https://glasstire.com/2021/11/01/catrina-mania-iii/>











# Mictēcacihuātl

La Catrina was not Latin America's first grand lady of the afterlife. This honour belongs to [Mictēcacihuātl](#) – the queen of the Aztec underworld of [Chicunamictlan](#). Her role was to watch over the bones of the dead, and her presence was front-and-centre during any recognition of those who had passed on.

And where had those souls passed to? The belief amongst the Mesoamericans was that the dead make a journey that descends nine levels to the depths of Chicunamictlan. The ancients' view of death was not a mournful one: they saw it [as a part of the cycle of life](#), and celebrated the departed by leaving offerings on makeshift altars, or *ofrendas*, that would assist them in their onward trials.

These *ofrendas* continue to be associated with Day of the Dead, which over the centuries also absorbed pagan and Catholic celebration customs – including the dates of the festival straddling both [All Hallows Eve, All Saints Day and All Soul's Day](#). But the defining image of the modern festival would come later – and from an unexpected source.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dlqif090fz8&t=10s>





Mictēcacihuātl belongs to the group of gods that were humans before they became gods. However, she became a goddess through tragedy and cruelty: she was sacrificed as an infant to the unnamed gods.

As such, Mictēcacihuātl was appointed to become a goddess of the dead, along with her husband, the god Mictlantecuhctli. Together, the couple ruled over the underworld, called Mictlán in Aztec mythology.







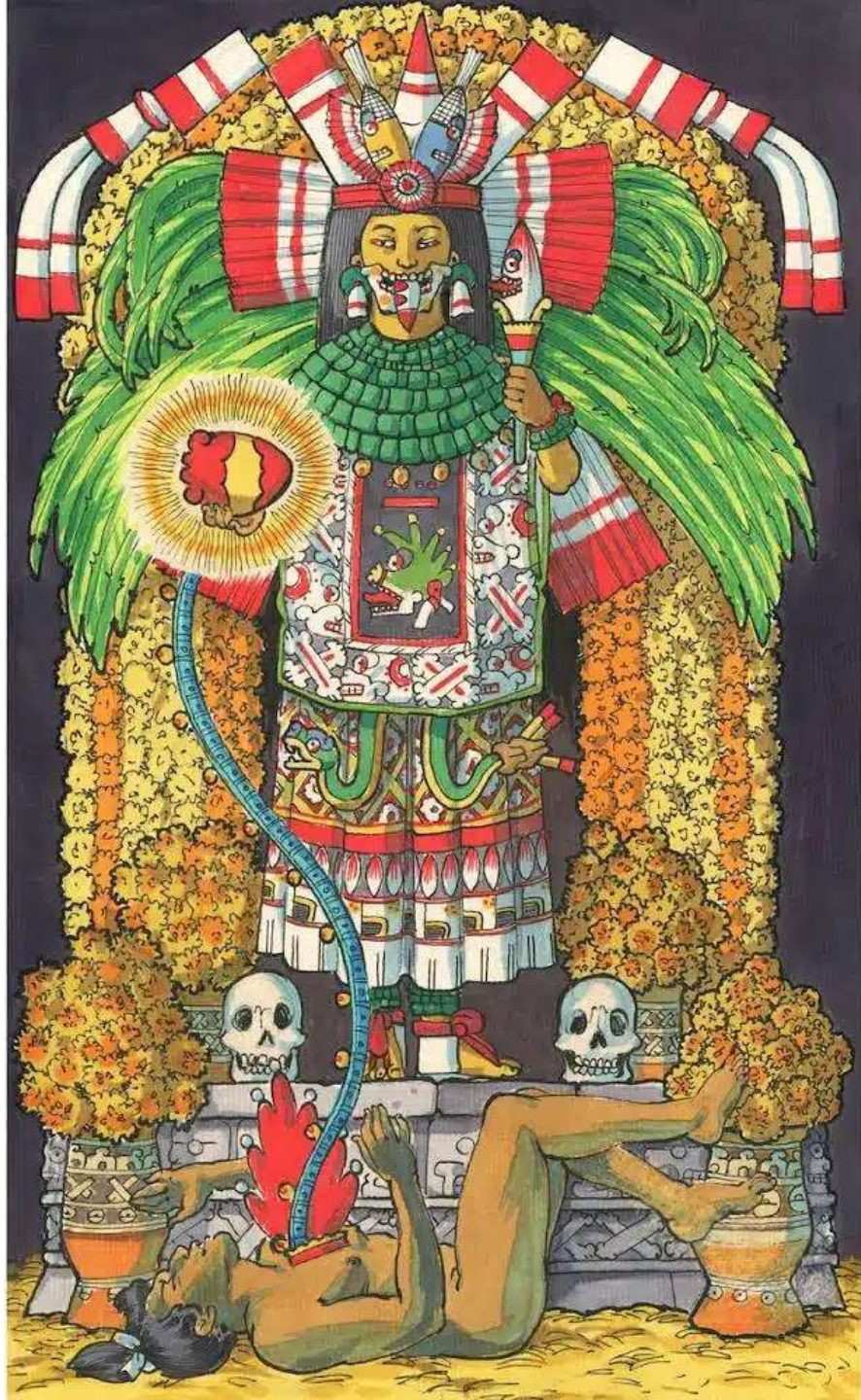




THESE IS RED BOTTOMS



THESE IS BLOODY SHOES





# Santa Muerte

***Nuestra Señora de la Santa Muerte*** (Spanish: [\[ˈnwestra seˈɲora ðe la ˈsanta ˈmwerte\]](#); Spanish for **Our Lady of Holy Death**), often shortened to **Santa Muerte**, is a [cult image](#), [female deity](#), and [folk saint](#) in [folk Catholicism](#) and [Mexican Neopaganism](#).<sup>[1][2]: 296–297</sup> A [personification of death](#), she is associated with healing, protection, and safe delivery to the [afterlife](#) by her devotees.<sup>[3]</sup> Despite condemnation by leaders of the [Catholic Church](#),<sup>[4]</sup> and more recently [evangelical movements](#),<sup>[5]</sup> her [cult](#)<sup>[a]</sup> has become increasingly prominent since the turn of the 21st century.<sup>[6]</sup>

Originally appearing as a male figure,<sup>[7]</sup> Santa Muerte now generally appears as a skeletal female figure, clad in a long robe and holding one or more objects, usually a [scythe](#) and a [globe](#).<sup>[8]</sup> Her robe can be of any color, as more specific images of the figure vary widely from devotee to devotee and according to the rite being performed or the petition being made.<sup>[9]</sup>

The following of Santa Muerte began in [Mexico](#) some time in the mid-20th century and was clandestine until the 1990s. Most prayers and other rites have been traditionally performed privately at home.<sup>[10]</sup> Since the beginning of the 21st century, worship has become more public, especially in [Mexico City](#) after a believer called Enriqueta Romero initiated her famous Mexico City shrine in 2001.<sup>[10][11][12]</sup> The number of believers in Santa Muerte has grown over the past ten to twenty years, to an estimated 10–20 million followers in Mexico, parts of [Central America](#), the [United States](#), and [Canada](#).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UgD9e-5-AwE>







# Jose Posado

José Guadalupe Posada (1852–1913) is considered the father of Mexican printmaking.

José Guadalupe Posada Aguilar was a Mexican political lithographer who used relief printing to produce popular illustrations. His work has influenced numerous Latin American artists and cartoonists because of its satirical acuteness and social engagement.

<https://www.ksat.com/news/local/2020/10/05/story-behind-mexican-artist-who-inspired-la-calavera-catrina/>

<https://abc7news.com/la-catrina-day-of-the-dead-dia-de-los-muertos-makeup/11188257/>











# LA CALAVERA OAXAQUEÑA



*La Calavera valiente*    *Todos quítense el sombrero*  
*Hoy acaba de llegar;*    *Que así la deben mirar.*

Porque yo soy de Oaxaca,  
 Y es hoy hombre para mí,  
 Y es a los más desalmados  
 Los de arriba los peo.



No tiene que ser feo,  
 Chismoso con color,  
 Que yo no soy hablador  
 Sin valiente de veras.

A cualquier lo despierto,  
 No me tiem el corazo,  
 Y ninguna me haga reos,  
 Que lo despierto al panto.

De nadie me sé dejar,  
 El mundo pa mí no se tira,  
 Y a todos más de quipen  
 Fui hecho un compromiso.

Todos me levantan por  
 Crimigo nadie se meo,  
 Y seque me los que quieren  
 Y vuman chuche al panto.

En mi tierra no hay coyotes,  
 Ni se rinden ni se raje,  
 Y a todos los habladores  
 En el hoyo los entaja.

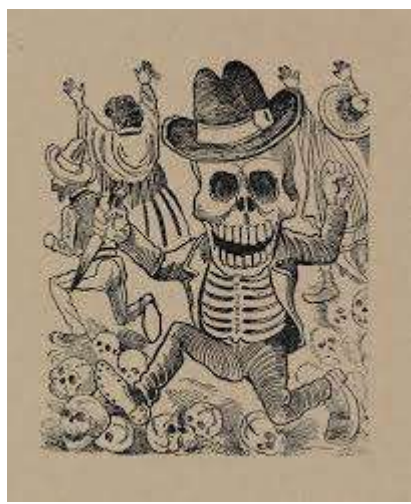
Si allá se fueran un poco  
 Se quieran lo meo,  
 Con el meo el de panto  
 Y el meo panto meo.



A los cobardes más  
 Con un vaso de meo,  
 Y con panto chuchos  
 De hormona, a la rival.



A los amigos me agaña,  
 Y me de usen me to,  
 A los amigos me to  
 Al meo me to.



## CALAVERAS DE Caudillos de Silla Presidencial













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MOUSE**

OPENS NATIONWIDE ON DIA DE LOS MUERTOS™

DIA DE LOS MUERTOS™ ©2013 THE WALT DISNEY COMPANY



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presenta

del 7 de abril al 7 de junio de 1962.

EN HOMENAJE A LA MEMORIA DEL GENIAL GRABADOR MEXICANO

**JOSE GUADALUPE  
POSADA**

la  
**EXPOSICION**

de su obra en el

**PALACIO de BELLAS ARTES**



# Diego Rivera--*Dream of a Sunday Afternoon*

In 1946 [Diego Rivera](#) accepted a new commission: a mural for the restaurant of the majestic art deco Del Prado Hotel in Mexico City. By this point Rivera had become a much-loved godfather of Mexico's artistic and political worlds, a folk hero of sorts who represented the Socialist ideals of Mexico in the mid-20th century.

His new work, the vast mural *Sueño de una Tarde Dominical en la Alameda Central* (which translates as *Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Central*), 1946–1947, was set to combine personal and historical narratives. While drawing on his childhood and his love for [Frida Kahlo](#), the work was largely a panorama of the usual – and unusual – suspects of Mexico's storied past. And it was all for the consideration of the great and good as they sat down to dinner.

- <https://www.sothebys.com/en/videos/diego-riveras-dream-of-a-sunday-afternoon-a-surrealist-tableau-of-mexican-history>













# Calavera

- <https://www.cbsnews.com/chicago/news/catrina-statue-day-of-the-dead-brings-mexican-art-magnificent-mile/>
- Dance of the Catrinas
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7A4K\\_4xXeg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v7A4K_4xXeg)
- Catrina and Uncle sam George Rodriguez
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGkne9WPo5s&t=7s> Butch Locsin
- <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2021/10/day-of-the-dead-stamps-luis-fitch/>



# George Rodriguez

Born and raised in the border city of El Paso, TX, George Rodriguez creates decorative ceramic sculpture addressing his identity and community. Brought up by his mother and four older sisters, George quietly observed the love and hard work needed to maintain his family and community. His art began to manifest as search for his individualized voice. The first in his family to finish college, he received a BFA in ceramics from the University of Texas El Paso then went on to receive an MFA from the University of Washington. His world curiosity grew as a recipient of a Bonderman Travel Fellowship where he traveled the world through most of 2010.

- <https://www.craftinamerica.org/short/george-rodriguez-on-uncle-sam-and-tia-catrina>













# Carlomagno Pedro Martínez

While in Oaxaca, the Craft in America crew also visited ceramic artist Carlomagno Pedro Martínez in San Bartolo Coyotepec. Carlomagno is known for his *barro negro* (black clay ceramic) sculptures based on his interpretations of legends, stories, and cultural beliefs associated with Day of the Dead, Mexican history, and morality. He started working in clay at the age of four, taught by his parents. He hand builds his figures and often burnishes them using quartz. All of Carlomagno's siblings work in ceramics but each has their own individual style.

- <https://www.craftinamerica.org/artist/carlomagno-pedro-martinez>



# Magdalena Pedro Martinez

Magdalena Pedro Martínez is an outstanding *barro negro* ceramist, in the tradition of her family in San Bartolo Coyotepec, Oaxaca, Mexico. Trained as a medical doctor, she also devotes time to ceramics, specializing in female figures dressed in the traditional costumes of the regions of the state of Oaxaca. She views this as her particular contribution to the broader cause of preserving the culture.















# Nicolas de Jesus

Nicolas de Jesus is a Mexican artist from the Nahua region of Guerrero, Mexico. His work carries themes of Mexican rural life as well as politics and world events. The celebration Dia de los Muertos is a common subject in his art. Nicolás de Jesús developed his art through his parents and his community of Ameyaltepec.

- <https://www.purchase.edu/live/news/6158-nicolas-de-jesus-a-mexican-artist-for-global>























# Frida Kahlo Skulls

Mexico City is gearing up for the Day of the Dead with an exhibition dedicated to one of the country's most well-known artists.

Los 'Fridacráneos' are ten larger-than-life Calaveras, the distinctive adorned skulls that have come to symbolize Dia De Los Muertos, dedicated to Frida Kahlo.

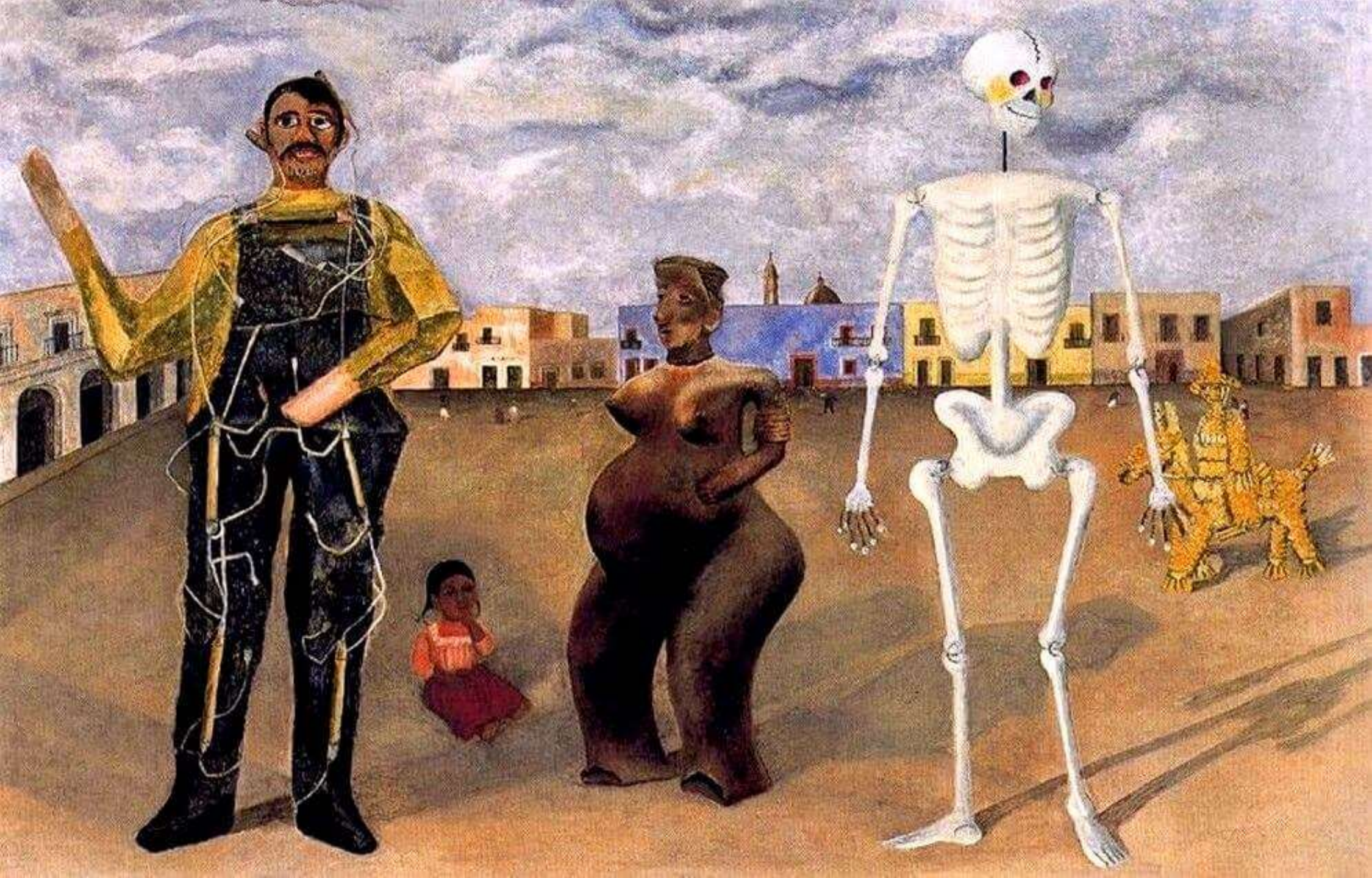
Pilar Artista, on the other hand, believes that the vivid symbolism of the Frida skulls are far more significant.

*"It is a representation based on Frida Kahlo's paintings. It is a reflection between life and death,"* Artista explained.

*"She lived experiences very close to death; she lost many children and underwent many surgeries, which is reflected in her painting. On the left side is the suffering and the reference to her lost children."*

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XyvRsvg3Fvc>























# Artemio Rodríguez

Artist and printmaker Artemio Rodríguez was born in 1972 in Michoacan, Mexico. His work is included in several permanent collections including the L.A. County Museum of Art, the Laguna Art Museum and the Institute of Graphic Arts of Oaxaca. Twelve of his linocuts were included in Dagoberto Gilb's Woodcuts of Women.

<https://exhibits.lib.berkeley.edu/spotlight/art-of-posada/feature/artemio-rodriguez-continuing-posada-s-legacy-in-contemporary-mexico> (in Spanish)

<https://tishstringer.com/wordpress/index.php/portfolio/not-lost-linocut-printing-with-artemio-rodriguez/>

















# CALAVERAS

ARTEMIO RODRIGUEZ











# Ofelia Esparza

## Ofrenda

Ofelia Esparza, educator and life-long artist, is an *altarista*, a master altar maker who teaches the meaning and history of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) and the altars that commemorate loved ones who have passed away. She began this work in 1979 at Self Help Graphics & Art, Los Angeles, CA, alongside founder Sister Karen Boccalero. Ofelia's strong commitment to keep Mexican tradition of Día de los Muertos alive in the US is visible in the heartfelt beauty of the community altars that she designs annually for the celebrations at Grand Park in Los Angeles.

- <https://www.craftinamerica.org/artist/ofelia-esparza>
- <https://www.craftinamerica.org/short/rosanna-esparza-ahrens-denise-esparza-on-dia-de-los-muertos-altars>

















ALTAR A MIS SERES QUERIDOS  
(ALTAR TO MY BELOVED ONES)



























# Marigolds

An altar just isn't complete without them. And if you believe what the Aztecs believed, then your ancestors need the scent to find their way back to you," she said. She'll be adding a couple dozen flowers to a personal family altar for her father and sister, who are interred at the cemetery.

"Our *cempasúchil* display will be small by comparison," she said, noting that some of the larger altars can include thick, carefully woven garlands of the flowers measuring 50 feet or more, draped over elaborate altar structures.

"I'm sure some will have thousands of flowers and when you walk up to them, Boom! The smell will just hit you in the face," Jimenez said, laughing.

"You either love it or hate it because it's like nothing else. Lucky for me, I love it."

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xzrmyExnEU>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rENBlk1DV7g>
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDSri1yP\\_k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDSri1yP_k)
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6StlqvLY5c>















# Papel Picado

**Papel picado** ("perforated paper," "pecked paper") is a traditional [Mexican decorative craft](#) made by cutting elaborate designs into sheets of [tissue paper](#).<sup>[1]</sup> Papel picado is considered a Mexican folk art. The designs are commonly cut from as many as 40-50 colored tissue papers stacked together and using a guide or template, a small [mallet](#), and [chisels](#), creating as many as fifty banners at a time.<sup>[2]</sup> Papel picado can also be made by folding tissue paper and using small, sharp scissors. Common themes include birds, floral designs, and skeletons. Papel picados are commonly displayed for both secular and religious occasions, such as [Easter](#), [Christmas](#), the [Day of the Dead](#), as well as during [weddings](#), [quinceañeras](#), [baptisms](#), and [christenings](#). In [Mexico](#), papel picados are often incorporated into the altars ([ofrendas](#)) during the Day of the Dead and are hung throughout the streets during holidays.<sup>[3]</sup> In the streets of [Mexico](#), papel picados are often strung together to create a [banner](#) that can either be hung across alleyways or displayed in the home.

In early Mexico,<sup>[2]</sup> Aztec people chiseled spirit figures into bark. Aztecs used [mulberry](#) and [fig tree](#) bark to make a rough paper called [amate](#). This custom evolved later into the art form now known as papel picado.<sup>[1]</sup> Near the middle of the nineteenth century, Mexican people first encountered tissue paper at [hacienda](#) stores and adapted it to the craft. Nowadays, artisans usually layer 40 to 50 layers of tissue paper and punch intricate designs into them using a *fierrito*, a type of chisel.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUwNc8y1pqQ&t=15s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NqbhiLKQbM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NxNsnVnx2jc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZQCqzxZc2M>











# Sugar Skull

Sugar skulls, also called calaveritas de azúcar (or calaveritas, for short), are literally skulls made from [sugar](#). They're found in Mexico and Mexican households for the Day of A calavera, in the context of Day of the Dead, is a representation of a human skull or skeleton. The term is often applied to edible or decorative skulls made from either sugar or clay, used in the Mexican celebration of the Day of the Dead and the Roman Catholic holiday All Souls' Day. Sugar art was brought over from Spain to Mexico.

Sugarcane isn't indigenous to Mexico, but rather a product of colonialism. The concept for sugar skulls, in fact, originated in Palermo, Italy, where sugary confections were created to celebrate holidays. The tradition migrated to Spain, and when the Spanish conquered Mexico, the tradition became a part of Mexican culture and folklore as well. Skulls, or calaveras, made from clay or other materials, were often popular symbols in celebrating the Day of the Dead, and sugar skulls became prominent over a century ago.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hJeDKPA8Tgw>



# Monarch Butterfly Migration

DAY OF DEAD - Monarch Butterfly Arriving for the Day Of The Dead in Michoacán [México]

Every year, for so long, the arrival of millions of monarchs butterfly arrives at the same time as the day of dead in Michoacán México, is it accidental? In this stunning video clip 'Day Of The Dead Michoacán México'.

They believe the butterfly is the soul of a family member that has passed and is coming to visit.

- <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=641423083057838>
- <https://monarchbutterflies.ca/blogs/day-of-the-dead-and-monarch-conservation-the-national-wildlife-federation-blog/>
- <https://www.pbs.org/video/monarch-butterfly-mexican-folk-art-collective-enwn9x/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUWyDfqFD8Q>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iM2bL0bPkDg>































# Hollywood Forever Cemetery

Every year on the last Saturday before November 2nd, [Hollywood Forever](#) welcomes the community onto our cemetery grounds to celebrate Dia de Los Muertos – the Day of the Dead. Dia de Los Muertos is one of Mexico's most colorful traditional holidays, which reunites and honors beloved ancestors, family and friends. It is believed that on Dia de Los Muertos, the living commune with the dead – it is a mystical time when the veil is lifted between their two realms, so that they may share a day together.

At Hollywood Forever participants from the around the world, most of them in costume, spend a unique and memorable day. The cemetery comes to life with joyful celebration, as a vibrant procession featuring hundreds of Aztec ritual dancers weaves through the cemetery.

More than 100 altars, created by members of the community in remembrance of their ancestors and loved ones, dot the grounds. Musical performances by Grammy Award winning recording artists entertain on five stages. An art exhibition in The Cathedral Mausoleum displays hundreds of original artworks. Food vendors from around Los Angeles, arts and crafts vendors, and a children's arts project area complete the experience.

At the end of the day, judges choose the best dressed Calaca (skeleton), as well as the most memorable altars.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FT1rJgKqMEY>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFiD-2QpGOw>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38wgjS42PI4>
- <https://www.ladayofthedeath.com/event-info/> 2023
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z652RscVypE&t=8s>











# Assignment Suggestions...

- Create a print using sugar skull and/or monarch butterfly linework
- Create an 'ofrenda' still life incorporating elements from a lost loved one. You can photograph this or create a painting or drawing based on it.
- Create an homage to a favorite artist, who has died. Frida Khalo or Robert Irwin, for example.