

TACOMA ART MUSEUM

MEDIA RELEASE

October 20, 2016

Media Contact: Julianna Verboort, 253-272-4258 x3011 or JVerboort@TacomaArtMuseum.org



12th Annual Día de los Muertos Free Community Festival at Tacoma Art Museum coming on November 6

Tacoma, WA – Grab your friends and family and visit [Tacoma Art Museum](#) (TAM) on Sunday, November 6 from 10 am to 4 pm for the colorful and lively [Día de los Muertos](#) celebration. The museum's most popular free festival of the year offers an array of cultural activities including live mariachi music, dancing, hands-on art making, face painting and more. New features this year include a free youth workshop (limited capacity, sign up at event), lighted alebrijes (Oaxacan-Mexican folk art sculptures of fantastical creatures) and a metal folk-art activity. Nearly thirty community altars will be on view. The mesmerizing centerpiece is a tapete—traditional sand painting—created by local Tacoma artists. With complimentary admission all day, visitors have ample opportunity to see TAM's exhibitions and participate in a day of cultural exchange.

“We draw participation from families and groups who create incredible altars to honor loved ones. Día de los Muertos is personal, celebratory, and full of memories,” shared Britt Board, Community Engagement Manager. “The success of this event is the result of collaboration with our longtime partners from [Proyecto MoLE](#), [Centro Latino](#), and the [Consulado de México en Seattle](#).”

Lilian Córdoba Vázquez, Director for Community Outreach of the Consulado de México en Seattle, echoed the enthusiasm. “We are very happy to join TAM again to celebrate Día de Muertos. This festival is deeply rooted in the tradition of the south and center of México. It intertwines ceremonial symbolism, Catholic, and pre-Hispanic traditions with the ethnic and cultural diversity of the country. Death comes to visit, share, dance, and eat before beginning again her path of eternal rest. We receive her with altars or ofrendas that include flowers, candles, and refreshments for the long trip ahead. This year at TAM we are particularly proud to incorporate the lighted alebrijes built by artists Ruben Castillo and Oscar Becerra, an explosion of colors emphasizing the festive character of Day of the Dead.”

Internationally known artist Ruben Castillo will lead a youth workshop, making mini-altars and small tombs. The workshop is open to the first 75 youth to sign up on the day of the event. He will also move throughout the lobby and atrium wearing his hand-crafted alebrijes. Castillo is passionate about folk art. Born in México City, he is a member of a collective of artists who exhibit and sell their work in the neighborhoods of Sullivan and San Angel. Since 2006 he has collaborated with the [Museum of Popular Art in México City](#) and with them, has created and shown lighted [alebrijes](#) internationally. This year, the lighted alebrijes will be seen for the first time in the United States as part of Día de los Muertos celebrations in Seattle and Tacoma.

A team of four local Tacoma artists will create the tapete: Carlos Cervantes, Jorge Garcia, Jorge Mota and Saiyare Refaei. They are excited to show what local artists can bring to this cultural tradition. Their tapete installation will depict La Santa Muerte, also known as Santísima Muerte, the beloved goddess of death. Her origins date back to pre-colonial México when she was known as Mictecacihuatl, “Lady of the Land of the Dead.” She is believed to be the protector of souls residing in the underworld.

The community altars will be on view beginning Sunday, October 23, through the festival on Sunday, November 6. See Tacoma Art Museum’s [website](#) for details, or follow the Día de los Muertos [Facebook event](#) page.





Schedule of activities:

Ongoing from 10am – 4pm:

- Metal Folk Art Activity
- Paper Flower Making
- Face Painting by Centro Latino
- 30 Community Altars

10:30 am – Welcoming Remarks by Consul Dondisch

11 am – 12 pm (noon) – Youth Artmaking Workshop facilitated by internationally recognized artist Ruben Castillo. Open to the first 75 youth participants to sign up on the day of the event. Make colorful mini altars or small tombs. This workshop is made possible by the Consulado de México en Seattle.

12:00 – 12:30 pm – [Ceatl Tonalli Aztec Dance Performance](#)

1 – 2 pm – [Mariachi Ayutla Musical Performance](#)

Free Community Festivals are supported by the [Tacoma Arts Commission](#). Seasonal support provided by [ArtsFund](#). Presented in partnership with: Proyecto MoLE, Centro Latino, and the Consulado de México en Seattle.

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Image Credits, top to bottom, left to right:

Lighted alebrijes (Oaxacan-Mexican folk art sculptures of fantastical creatures) by artists Ruben Castillo and Oscar Becerra. Courtesy of Consulado de México en Seattle.

Tapete sand painting from 2015 Día de los Muertos created by artist Rene Julio. Courtesy of Tacoma Art Museum. Miniature tomb, artmaking workshop. Courtesy of Consulado de México en Seattle.

Tapete artist team for TAM's 2016 Día de los Muertos Free Community Festival. Courtesy of the artists.

About Tacoma Art Museum

Tacoma Art Museum is an anchor in the city's downtown and a gathering space for connecting people through art. TAM's collection contains nearly 5,000 works, with an emphasis on the art and artists of the Northwest and broader western region. The collection includes the largest retrospective museum collection of glass art by Tacoma native

Dale Chihuly on continuous view; the most significant museum collection of jewelry by Northwest artists; key holdings in 19th century European and 20th century American art; and one of the finest collections of Japanese woodblock prints on the West Coast. In 2014, TAM welcomed a gift of 295 works of western American art in the Haub Family Collection, one of the premier collections in the nation and the first major western American art museum collection in the Northwest. The Haub gift included \$20 million for new galleries and endowed funds. The Haub Family Galleries opened in 2014. In January 2016, TAM announced the gift of the Benaroya Collection, including 225 works of art. The donation also includes nearly \$14 million in funding for new gallery space to showcase the collection and an endowment for a dedicated curator and care for the collection. The Benaroya wing is expected to open in fall 2018.

HOURS – Tuesdays–Sundays 10 am–5 pm, Third Thursdays 10 am–8 pm;
Third Thursdays free from 5-8 pm.

ADMISSION – Adult \$15, Student/Military/Senior (65+) \$13, Family \$40 (2 adults and up to 4 children under 18). Children 5 and under free. Members always free.

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