



MUSEUM of
NORTHERN
ARIZONA

Celebrating the Colorado Plateau

PRESS RELEASE

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Museum of Northern Arizona, Nuestras Raíces present 13th Annual Celebraciones de la Gente October 22 & 23

(Flagstaff, Ariz.) October 10, 2016 – Celebrate Mexican cultural traditions in a festive setting at the *13th Annual Celebraciones de la Gente*, a lively Day of the Dead festival October 22 and 23, from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., at the Museum of Northern Arizona (MNA) in Flagstaff. Event admission is \$12 adult and \$8 student (with ID), American Indian (with tribal affiliation) and youth (10-17). Children under 10 and MNA members are free. Weekend passes are \$18 adult and \$12 student. MNA is located at 3101 N. Fort Valley Road, two miles from downtown Flagstaff on scenic Highway 180 to the Grand Canyon.

Visitors will enjoy two days of fine art and unique crafts as well as dance and music performances. From paintings and jewelry, to retablos and tinwork, a variety of artwork will be available for purchase by award-winning artists from Arizona and New Mexico. Mainstage performances by Mariachi Sol Azteca, Ballet Folklórico de Colores and pre-Columbian music and dancing by Martin Espino and Los Matachines will showcase the artistry and cultural traditions of Mexico. Children will delight in fun Day of the Dead inspired arts and crafts in the Kids Discovery Room as well as *papel picado* (cut paper) and sugar skull decorating workshops.

“*Celebraciones* celebrates all aspects of Latino culture, not only locally but throughout the southwest and Mexico,” said Cristen Crujido, Director of Marketing & Public Affairs at the Museum of Northern Arizona. “It’s a feast for the senses and a truly immersive, not-to-be-missed Day of the Dead experience.”

In addition to the visual and performing arts, the festival also includes humanities-based lectures and presentations by noted authors and scholars focusing on Latino history, culture and heritage. Anthropologist Dr. Ben Nelson will examine the connectivity among the ancient cultures of Meso-America and those of the American Southwest. Valley author Stella Pope Duarte will share a few of Mexico’s most famous legends including *La Llorona* (weeping woman), while scholar Elena Díaz Björkquist will discuss the lives of Mexican-American women in the mining town of Morenci, Ariz. Local historian Delia Ceballos Muñoz will highlight the contributions and struggles of Flagstaff’s pioneering Mexican, Mexican-American, Basque and Spanish families.

Day of the Dead (*Día de los Muertos*), an ancient pre-Columbian observance, is held throughout Mexico, Latin America and the Southwest on November 1 and 2 (All Saint’s Day and All Soul’s Day). While rituals and timing vary geographically, central to every celebration is a gathering of friends and family who visit cemeteries to remember their ancestors. Today’s celebrations fuse centuries of indigenous practices with contemporary traditions and spiritual beliefs. *Ofrendas* (altars), marigold flowers, sugar skull and skeleton caricatures, *pan de muerto* (bread of the dead) and photos and mementos of those who have passed are just a few of the symbolic items associated with the holiday.

The Museum’s Jaime Major Golightly Courtyard will be transformed — decorated with brightly colored *papel picado*, candles and more than a dozen flower-and-memento-filled *ofrendas* created by

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local families and artists. Festival attendees are encouraged to bring a memento or photo to be placed at the community *ofrenda* to honor their loved one(s).

“*Día de los Muertos* is both a joyous occasion and time of reflection,” said Crujido. “It is a beautiful, festive and ritualistic practice that keeps the memories of our loved ones alive, in a humorous yet healing way.”

New this year, community members can also enjoy an evening viewing of the *ofrendas* on Saturday, October 22, from 6-8 p.m. Hot chocolate and *pan dulce* (sweet bread) will be available for purchase. Admission for the Saturday evening event is \$5 per person and free for children under 10.

Celebraciones de la Gente is presented in partnership with *Nuestras Raíces*, a local grassroots organization of Flagstaff’s Hispanic pioneer families from the 1900s, dedicated to promoting Mexican, Mexican-American and Hispanic culture.

A member preview, Friday, October 21, from 6 – 8:00 p.m. includes hors d’oeuvres, a silent auction and first opportunity to purchase artwork from participating artists. To become a member of the Museum of Northern Arizona, call 928.774.5211, ext. 219.

The event is made possible through the Arizona Commission on the Arts which receives support from the State of Arizona and the National Endowment for the Arts, Arizona Humanities, City of Flagstaff BBB Revenues/Flagstaff Arts Council, County Board of Supervisors Liz Archuleta/District 2 & Mandy Metzger/District 4 and Arizona Music Pro.

For a complete list of participating artists and scheduled events, visit musnaz.org or call 928.774.5213.

Image Captions (All photos by Tony Marinella):

(Left) A community *ofrenda* at *Celebraciones de la Gente*

(Center) A member of Ballet Folklórico de Colores performs at *Celebraciones de la Gente*

(Right) Mariachi Sol Azteca entertains Museum guests at *Celebraciones de la Gente*

The **Museum of Northern Arizona** inspires a sense of love and responsibility for the beauty and diversity of the Colorado Plateau. Founded in 1928, the 200-acre campus includes an historic exhibit building with nine galleries showcasing the geology, anthropology and art of the region; research and collections facilities; a museum shop and bookstore; and more than 450 public programs annually. To learn more, visit musnaz.org or call (928) 774-5213.

Location: Museum of Northern Arizona, 3101 N. Fort Valley Rd, Flagstaff, AZ 86001

Phone & Website 928.774.5213, musnaz.org

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