



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Media Contact:

Korum Bischoff

Cell: 206-941-4163

korum@biartmuseum.org

BIMA's annual Día de los Muertos celebration returns with expanded exhibition and supporting programs

BAINBRIDGE ISLAND, Wash. – Since opening in 2013, Bainbridge Island Museum of Art (BIMA) has hosted an exhibition and community event honoring the Mexican cultural celebration *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead) annually each fall. This year's celebration will be centered around a traditional *ofrenda* (altar) and an exhibition called *Día de los Muertos & Beyond*, featuring the work of local artists of Mexican heritage. The *ofrenda* will be open to the public for offerings/remembrances beginning Saturday, November 2 through Sunday, November 10.

Supporting programs include a public celebration with two seatings on Saturday, November 2; a concert by Correo Aereo that evening; a poetry reading and workshop with Araceli Cruz and Bainbridge Island Poet Laureate Michele Bombardier; and a workshop and presentation by celebrated artist and piñata-maker Roberto Benevidez, whose recent *New York Times* feature went viral.

Entry to BIMA and access to the *Día de los Muertos and Beyond* and *ofrenda* exhibition are free. Some events require paid tickets or free registration. Complete information can be found on BIMA's website at: <https://www.biartmuseum.org/events/dia-de-los-muertos/>

Día de los Muertos is a colorful Mexican holiday centered around gatherings of family and friends to pray for, remember, and support the spiritual journey of friends and family members who have passed away. Traditions connected with the holiday include building private altars called *ofrendas*, where visitors honor the deceased by leaving sugar skulls, marigolds, favorite foods and beverages, possessions, and photos of the deceased.

In addition to the *ofrenda* installation and exhibition, BIMA and its community partners have planned the following special events:

Saturday, November 2 – Community Celebration

9am-3pm – Butterfly Wing Workshop at KiDiMu

- Bring the kids and grandkids to BIMA's neighbor and children's museum KiDiMu to make and decorate butterfly wings for the mariposa (butterfly) processions to BIMA for the Día de Los Muertos Community Celebrations! There will be a tent outside with butterfly wing supplies, blue blocks to play on, and bubbles from 9am-3pm. If you make wings and wear them to KiDiMu your group will receive 50% off admission to KiDiMu all day. Processions will happen twice, just before the Community Celebration ceremonies, leaving KiDiMu at 11am and 3pm. FREE.

11am & 3pm – Public Opening and Celebration

- On Saturday, November 2, BIMA will host community celebrations of Dia de Los Muertos that are memorable, beautiful, and rich with Mexican cultural significance. This year there will be two community celebration ceremonies presented by Alice Mendoza, at 11am and 3pm. This is a FREE, ticketed event. To ensure a safe and enjoyable experience with enough space for all, reservations are required to attend. An opening procession of butterfly-costumed kids will lead guests from KiDiMu down a flower path into BIMA's galleries humming with music, art, and activities. Centered around a traditional ofrenda (altar), a colorful, multi-paneled shrine created by artist Araceli Cruz, guests are encouraged to add mementos and stories honoring loved ones who've passed on. Enjoy samples of Mexican hot chocolate or atole and pan de muerto, make-and-take art activities, traditional face painting, and strolling musicians sharing Mexican folk songs. FREE. Reservations and information at <https://www.biartmuseum.org/event/dia-de-los-muertos-community-celebrations/>

Saturday, November 2, 7pm – Correo Aereo in Concert

- Correo Aereo (Air Mail) is an award-winning multi-instrumental and vocal Latin American/World Music duo that performs the traditional music of Latin America (mainly Venezuela, Argentina, and Mexico) alongside original compositions. Their repertoire draws from these lineages, their Indigenous American roots, and the African, N. African & Sephardic diasporas. Abel Rocha and Madeleine Sosin combine a stunning array of string and percussion instruments with silken vocal harmonies described as 'locked in carnal embrace' by the Austin Chronicle. They honor tradition while embracing organic innovation, resulting in music that is both viscerally ancient and vibrantly contemporary! Tickets and information at <https://www.biartmuseum.org/event/correo-aereo/>

Sunday, November 3, 11am-2pm – Workshop: Illuminated Postcards with Roberto Benavidez

- Using a mix of old-world and contemporary aesthetics and materials, celebrated piñata artist Roberto Benavidez will guide participants in creating their own Illuminated Postcards using goatskin parchment, glues, crepe papers, and inks. Students will be hand-cutting and hole-punching crepe paper shapes to add to their postcards, and using

ink pens and stamps to further ornament their artwork. Roberto will be providing the stamps he used in his commissioned piece, *Illuminated Passport*, currently on view as part of the *Crossing the Line: The Passport Re-Imagined* exhibition here at BIMA.

Tickets and full presenter bio at

<https://www.biartmuseum.org/event/dia-de-los-muertos-workshop-illuminated-postcards-with-roberto-benavidez/>

Sunday, November 3, 3pm – Día de Los Muertos Poetry

Reading & Workshop

- This poetry reading and workshop with poet Michele Bombardier and facilitated by Araceli Cruz will include discussion, Q&A, and writing prompts for participants to write their own poems to loved ones. A fun, stress-free workshop: all levels of writing welcome, no experience in poetry necessary. Recommended for ages 14+. Please bring a pen, paper/notebook, and a copy of a picture of your loved one(s). Reception to follow. Tickets and instructor information at <https://www.biartmuseum.org/event/dia-de-los-muertos-poetry-reading-workshop/>

Monday, November 4, 6pm – Curated Conversations: Roberto Benavidez

- With work in two simultaneous exhibitions at BIMA, Roberto Benavidez is a sculptor specializing in the piñata form. Commissioned by Cynthia Sears, his *Illuminated Passport* is part of *Crossing the Line: The Passport Re-Imagined* and his piñatas are featured in our annual Día de Los Muertos exhibition. In this Curated Conversation, Roberto will cover his career trajectory and share how he came to piñatas as an artistic medium. The piñata craft has been moving between borders for centuries. Although people in the U.S. identify the piñata as distinctly Mexican, it also has roots in China, Spain, and Italy. In conversation with BIMA's Education lead, Jenna d'Anna, he will discuss his *Illuminated Passport* and how it follows the historical path of the piñata in whimsical and playful ways. Woven into his work are subtle references to sin, sexuality, and icons from each country that contributed to the piñata's evolution. The mashup of the medieval aesthetic with piñata materials is intended to reflect and celebrate his mixed-race background and the piñata's multicultural history. Opening reception at 6pm and audience Q&A to follow the presentation. Tickets and full presenter bio at <https://www.biartmuseum.org/event/curated-conversations-roberto-benavidez/>

Through November 17, 2024 – Exhibition: *Día de los Muertos and Beyond*

- BIMA invites the public for Day of the Dead festivities, and a celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month. This year's expanded exhibition combines traditional Día de los Muertos themes and a participatory ofrenda (altar), with broader contemporary art from Puget Sound-area Hispanic and Latine artists.

BIMA's 2023 *Día de los Muertos* celebration is generously sponsored by PRISM Fund for Cultural Programs & Celebrations, Lorenz & Saez Real Estate Team, KiDiMu, ArtsWA, and the Ames Family Foundation Cultural Diversity Series.

About Bainbridge Island Museum of Art:

Bainbridge Island Museum of Art inspires curiosity, wonder, and understanding by connecting people with the contemporary art and craft of the Puget Sound region. The art museum exhibits, interprets, preserves, collects, and promotes works of proven cultural value as well as new works by emerging artists and craftspeople.

The art museum is open daily 10am-5pm. Free admission. BIMA is located in beautiful downtown Bainbridge Island, at the corner of Hwy 305 and Winslow Way, just steps away from the ferry terminal, and with easy access via public transportation or by car from the Kitsap Peninsula.

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