

# *Día de los Muertos* Family Event at the Peabody Museum

Saturday November 2, 2013

12:00-4:00 PM

*All of the activities are on the third floor.*

## **Sugar Skull Workshop**

Decorate one of these popular festival confections (fee \$5.00 per sugar skull). Space available on a first-come, first-served basis. *Last seating for workshop at 3:30 pm.*

## **Day of the Dead Photo Stage**

Using your own camera, take your picture at the colorful altars or with our festive skeleton backdrop!

*The scissor  symbol below indicates dress-up crafts and activities to get you ready for your photo shoot!*

## **Calaca Mask Craft**

Decorate a skull (*calaca*) mask in a Day of the Dead style.

## **Face Painting**

Have your face painted with a *Día de los Muertos* symbol.

## **Fancy Hats**

Make a hat decorated with colorful paper flowers and other fun items.

## **Fun Jewelry/ Paper Marigolds**

Turn paper flowers (*cempasuchil*) into fun, wearable jewelry.

## **Messages of Love**

Honor your departed loved ones with your own special message.

## **Aztec Foods (two locations)**

Enjoy a spicy Aztec chocolate drink and learn about cacao – the origin of chocolate.

Try some traditional *pan de muerto* (bread of the dead) while learning about the original Aztec festival.

## **Chill out and Color Table**

Here's something easy for the little ones, and a place to catch your breath.

## Dancing Chickens of Ventura Fabian

Watch as master woodcarver Ventura Fabian from Oaxaca, Mexico creates his remarkable folk art.

## Papel Picado

Craft your own paper banner for *Día de los Muertos*.

## Make-a-Shaker

Create your own maracas to join the music with Maura Mendoza.

## !Musifiesta with Maura Mendoza 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm

Join in the music-making with Cambridge artist Maura Mendoza and her band playing Latin American rhythms.

## ***Special Activities - From our friends at the Harvard Museum of Natural History:***

### Meet Your Calavera (Skeleton)

Get hands-on with the skeleton, Mr. Bones, to learn to identify and assemble the same bones found inside you.

### Animals of the Aztec

Meet the animals that some Aztec gods are based on who are important in the mythology behind *Día de los Muertos* celebrations.

### **About *El Día de los Muertos***

On November 2nd, Mexico celebrates “*El Día de los Muertos*” or “the Day of the Dead.” This is a national holiday, but its roots go far into the past and the festival still reflects pre-Hispanic traditions and attitudes towards death. Throughout this holiday, Mexicans celebrate death as a part of life, rather than as something to be feared. During *Día de los Muertos*, the souls of departed loved ones are welcomed back to earth for a few special hours. Mexico is comprised of many different ethnic groups and every community has its own unique and distinct customs for welcoming back the dead. The basic ritual, however, remains the same: families prepare altars at home and travel to their loved ones’ graves which they decorate with bright yellow flowers –*cempasuchils* (flowers of the dead) – as well as with family photos, candles, religious images, offerings of food and drink, and even special objects loved by the deceased in life.

Weeks before November 2nd, bakers and artisans begin creating a dazzling display of arts and crafts like sugar skulls (*calaveras*), sweet “bread of the dead” (*pan de muertos*), cut paper (*papel picado*) and colorful masks. Markets bustle as people prepare for their own family celebrations and *El Día de los Muertos* becomes the center of community life in many towns. Community is an integral part of Mexican life, and most families come together during the Day of the Dead to remember their loved ones and participate in the preparations for reunion. In cemeteries throughout Mexico, where many families keep a night-long vigil by their loved ones’ graves, community feasting, music, and storytelling is common. However, despite the communal, festive nature of the holiday, the Day of the Dead ultimately remains a private, sacred event during which individuals contemplate the transitory nature of life.

Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology

[www.peabody.harvard.edu](http://www.peabody.harvard.edu)

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