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**Dia de los Muertos Festival at Mesa Arts Center**

*Presented by SRP*

Saturday, Oct. 26 – Sunday, Oct. 27, 2019



**Mesa, AZ** (September 27, 2019) – On Saturday, Oct. 26, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, Oct. 27, from noon to 5 p.m., the Mesa Arts Center campus will host a celebration of the memory of departed loved ones with the annual Dia de los Muertos Festival.

The free festival will offer a nonstop schedule of live entertainment, participatory children’s activities, traditional face painting, a wide variety of food options, studio demonstrations, and a Mercado Marketplace, featuring traditional and contemporary merchandise, jewelry, and Mexican arts and crafts from over 40 local artisans and vendors.

Through a partnership with the Mexican Consulate, artists Oscar Becerra Mora and Ruben Miguel Castillo Navarette of Mexican folk art will be in residence at Mesa Arts Center during the month of October to create an original, large-scale, sculpture. In addition to the large Alebrije which will be installed at the festival, the artists will also offer free workshops wherein participants can learn about the art form, see demonstrations of how they are created and take home a small alebrije for themselves.

In the spirit of traditional Dia de los Muertos festivities, a community altar designed by artist Kyllan Maney with Mesa Arts Center volunteers, will be the centerpiece for the festival, where attendees can leave mementos in honor of their loved ones who have passed.

Tucson-based Roni Capin-Ashford, award-winning bilingual children’s book author and writer of *Miguel and the Amazing Alebrijes* Read Along Storybook & Audiobook, *My Tata’s Remedies*, *My Nana’s Remedies*, and *Hip, Hip, Hooray, It’s Monsoon Day!*, will offer storytime and book signings throughout the event. *Miguel and the Amazing Alebrijes* was commissioned by Disney and inspired by the movie *Coco*.

Altars created by community groups, schools and families will also be on display for a festival contest sponsored by the Mexican Consulate and Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens.

Festival participants of all ages are invited to decorate ceramics pieces and make paper flowers, along with other hands-on activities. Festivalgoers can also enjoy face painting inspired by symbols of the Day of the Dead commemoration and live painting by artists Champ and Such Styles, La Morena, Mando Rascon and Lalo Cota.

The festival will culminate in a performance and an open procession to the Community Altar led by Mariachi Pasion at 4:45 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 27. Mesa Arts Center's studios will offer free demonstrations throughout the festival and The Store, an artists cooperative and gallery will also be open and offering Day of the Dead themed items.

The event is also sponsored in part by the Mexican Consulate, Crescent Crown Distributing, DPR Construction, First Things First, Food City, Modelo, First Things First, 93.3 Alt AZ, 100.7 KSLX, Waymo and Phoenix New Times. There is no charge to attend the Dia de los Muertos Festival, and parking is free. Mesa Arts Center is located at One East Main Street in downtown Mesa.

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### **About Mesa Arts Center**

Mesa Arts Center, owned and operated by the City of Mesa, is a unique, architecturally stunning facility located in the heart of downtown Mesa. Arizona's largest multidisciplinary arts center is home to four theaters, five art galleries in the MCA Museum, and 14 art studios. Guests, patrons, and students come to Mesa Arts Center to enjoy the finest live entertainment, performances and festivals, world-class visual art exhibitions, and outstanding arts education classes. The Mesa Arts Center mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible, and relevant. For more information, visit [mesaartscenter.com](http://mesaartscenter.com).