

20
YEARS



MESA ARTS CENTER



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Celebrate Día de los Muertos at Mesa Arts Center Saturday, Oct. 19 and Sunday, Oct. 20, 2024



Image credit: Día de los Muertos Festival at Mesa Arts Center, 2023, photo by Slaven Gujic. Additional high-res images [here](#).

Mesa, AZ – The City of Mesa, Mesa Arts Center and the community proudly celebrate the memories of departed loved ones with the 18th annual **Día de los Muertos Festival** on **Saturday, Oct. 19** from **10 a.m. to 6 p.m.**, and **Sunday, Oct. 20**, from **9 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

On Saturday, Oct. 19, the free festival kicks off at 10 a.m. with a traditional Aztec Dance performance by **Ministerio de Danza Azteca**. On Sunday, Oct. 20, the closing

ceremony at 4:30 p.m. will include **Mayor Giles, Vice Mayor Francisco Heredia, and Consul General of Mexico Jorge Mendoza Yescas.**

“Mesa Arts Center’s Día de los Muertos festival is special for its combination of rich cultural traditions and community-focused experiences,” said Mandy Tripoli, deputy director of visual arts and engagement/education. “From the community altar that invites attendees to add photographs to honor the memories of their loved ones to diverse performances and hands-on art activities to our inclusive Relaxed Hour and Mercado Marketplace, we celebrate the richness of Mexican culture.”

The nationally recognized, award-winning community festival offers nonstop **live entertainment** featuring mariachi music, folklórico dance, contemporary bands and, new this year, a dedicated DJ stage. **Hands-on artmaking activity** highlights include a Copper Enamel Calaveras workshop, and free youth nichos and printmaking activities. Mesa Arts Center’s **Art Studios** also offer **free glass and ceramics demonstrations** throughout the festival.

Other festival highlights include **traditional face painting**, a wide **variety of food options** and an expanded **vibrant Mercado Marketplace** showcasing traditional and contemporary merchandise, jewelry and Mexican arts and crafts from local artisans and vendors. **The Store**, an artist’s cooperative and gallery, will also be open and selling Day of the Dead themed items.

In the spirit of traditional Día de los Muertos festivities, **a community altar designed by local artists Luis and Pilar Estrada of Estradas Artistry** is the centerpiece of the festival, where attendees can leave mementos in honor of their loved ones who have passed. Photographs are kept and replaced on the altar each year or can be collected by 5 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 20.

Don’t miss the annual **Altar Contest** and **altars by local artist Zarco Guerrero** and Tucson artist **Xochitl Avila**. Additional installations include Mesa Arts Center’s **alebrije sculpture** created by Oscar Becerra Mora and Rueben Miguel Castillo Navarrete, **photobooths, tintamarresques** and a **cemetery scene** by Mesa Youth Creative Agency.

This year includes an **expanded Relaxed Hour on Sunday, Oct. 20, from 9–10 a.m.** The Relaxed Hour provides a Día de los Muertos Festival experience that is welcoming, inclusive and comfortable for those with sensory sensitivities. The Relaxed Hour has fewer crowds, reduced lighting, less amplified sound, allergy-friendly snacks, sensory-friendly play space, meet and greet with festival performers and artmaking activities led by specialist artists with expertise in working with people with additional needs.

The festival continues across Main St. at the Plaza at Mesa City Center with an extension of the Mercado, new roaming elote carts, a music stage, **live muralists** curated by local legends **Such and Champ Styles** and activities with **MABEL** in front of **ASU's MiX Center**. Additionally, as part of the celebration, **admission to Arizona Museum of Natural History is free on Saturday, Oct. 19** from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The festival culminates with an **open procession to the Community Altar**, led by traditional Aztec dancers and **Ballet Folklorico La Llorona**, followed by a closing performance by **Mariachi Pasion** at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 20.

There is no charge to attend the Día de los Muertos Festival, and parking is free.

Mesa Arts Center is located at One East Main Street in downtown Mesa. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.

Amazon and SRP are the presenting sponsors of the Día de los Muertos Festival. Additional festival support is provided by National Endowment for the Arts, Crescent Crown Distributing, Food City, Consulate General of Mexico, Modelo, 93.3 Alt AZ, 100.7 KSLX, Jarritos, Celerion, Humana/Centerwell Senior Primary Care, BASIS Charter Schools and is presented in partnership with Mesa Arts Center Foundation.

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 arts center is home to four theaters, five art galleries and 14 art studios. Guests, patrons and students come to Mesa Arts Center to enjoy the finest live entertainment and performances, world-class visual art exhibitions and outstanding arts education classes. Mesa Arts Center's mission is to inspire people through engaging arts experiences that are diverse, accessible and relevant. For more information, visit mesaartscenter.com.

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