

Frequently Asked Questions



Thank you for considering creating a work of art for the Bath House Cultural Center's exhibition *Día de Muertos: Messages of Love for the Forgotten and Disappeared*.

This exhibition focuses on commemorating the souls of those at risk of being forgotten and those who have disappeared.

To assist you in creating your artwork or planning your altar, we are providing a few answers and clarifications that you might find helpful:

Why are we focusing on October 30? Isn't the Day of the Dead on the 1st and 2nd of November.

Many people think of November 1st and 2nd as the only days when the Day of the Dead is observed, and when altars are set up to welcome the souls of the departed. However, many begin using their altars at least a week in advance, dedicating each day to honoring those who died under different circumstances. Our show focuses on October 30, when we celebrate the souls of those who don't have many surviving relatives to remember them.

How can we honor someone who has already been forgotten?

The people that we are honoring in the exhibition are not exactly forgotten. Rather, they are **at risk** of being forgotten because they do not have many living relatives to remember them.

Is there a specific date during the Day of the Dead celebration when we honor people who have disappeared?

There is no designated date for the celebration of the souls of the disappeared. However, we have included these individuals in the exhibition's theme because, like the nearly forgotten, they could be excluded from the celebration unless the community comes together to help to keep their memories alive.

Who is usually responsible for honoring the memory of the forgotten and disappeared?

Community involvement is exceptionally important when honoring those at risk of being forgotten or those who disappeared and were never seen again by their families. Many feel that it is their duty as human beings to assist in commemorating these souls, who might otherwise go unobserved.

Since there are only a few relatives, or a complete absence of them, who can celebrate the almost forgotten, the community makes sure that expressions of affection for those souls are still conveyed. In the case of those who have disappeared, it is

understandable that some families are not yet ready to participate in a Day of the Dead celebration because they hold onto hope for the return of their loved ones, even when it is likely that they have passed away. Still, the community supports the families and ensures that those souls are remembered and valued.

The theme is a bit somber this year. How can artists keep in mind the idea of festivity and joy that is so prevalent during the Day of the Dead while creating their entries?

The Día de Muertos celebration views death as a natural part of life and celebrates it with joy rather than sorrow. Rather than focusing on the death of individuals, the festivity commemorates their life with delight and affection.

Those who understand the Día de Muertos tradition recognize that feelings of sorrow for the loss of a loved one are inevitable and can endure for a long time. They also know that no celebration can bring complete comfort to mourners, but they see value in engaging as a community in the heartfelt demonstrations of affection that the holiday provides. Often, participating in building an altar or paying tribute to loved ones in a setting rooted in everlasting love and respect can help people gradually heal and realize that, even after a loss, they can focus on the happiest memories and the beautiful legacy left by their departed loved ones.

Does the art need to be inspired by one of my relatives?

The theme of the show is more likely to inspire artists to create works dedicated to distant relatives and acquaintances, or even people who they haven't personally met. Many artists are

probably aware of individuals or groups of people who passed away who might be overlooked during the Día de Muertos celebration. This show provides an opportunity to pay tribute to those neglected souls.

Does my artwork need to be inspired by one single person?

Your art can pay tribute to one or many individuals.

Can I submit a work of art that is dedicated to an animal or pet?

We are not accepting entries related to animals and pets for this show. Animals are celebrated on October 27, but they are not the central subject of our exhibition this year.

Can I collaborate with another artist, friend, or relative to create a work of art for this show?

We welcome entries that were created as a team.

Do you have any other questions that were not answered here? Please contact the exhibition curator at Enrique.fernandez@dallas.gov



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