



Día de Los Muertos Collective
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<FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE>

October 28, 2020

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS COLLECTIVE TAKES DAY OF THE DEAD CELEBRATION ONLINE IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY

Toronto's Día de los Muertos Collective, in partnership with Casa Maíz Cultural Centre, this year will take its much-loved annual celebration of Day of the Dead online. Most of the festivities, including a ceremonial offering and artistic performances, will be live-streamed or broadcast between **Thursday, October 29, and Sunday, November 1, 2020** (find program details and updates at www.diadelosmuertosto.org). Community members can also come together—in small numbers and in socially distant fashion—for the art exhibition *La Cosecha/Harvesting Bones* at the Peter MacKendrick Community Gallery at Artscape Wychwood Barns (76 Wychwood Avenue) **October 29–31, 2020**. Those unable or unwilling to visit in person will also be able to catch a glimpse of the exhibition online.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Day of the Dead (*Día de los Muertos*) is a unique Mexican celebration that was declared part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2003. Mixing the solemn with the festive, the folkloric with the sacred, it acknowledges death's universality and emphasizes the constant and inevitable interweaving of life and death.

Rarely in recent years has a time seemed more appropriate for the careful consideration of life's fragility than the year 2020, marked by the global coronavirus pandemic, accelerated environmental destruction, and sustained racial and gender violence. In light of these harrowing circumstances—and the sense of isolation and despair they have brought to many—the Día de los Muertos Collective deems the gathering of community to celebrate life and honour the dead a universal and essential need.

This year, the Collective has chosen *women* as a thematic focus, highlighting their contributions and particular struggles and dedicating the celebrations to the countless victims of femicide around the world. Raising awareness, the Collective seeks to carry a candle of hope in difficult times. The ceremony on October 31 will include a *red dress*—a nod to the REDress installation project begun by the artist and activist Jaime Black—to commemorate our missing and murdered Indigenous sisters.

COMMUNITY

Mindful not to endanger the community of which it forms part and on which it rests, the Collective has moved the majority of the celebrations—both ceremonial and artistic—online. Yet the spirit of shared experience will hold strong: the community will be invited and guided to create its own Day of the Dead altars at home, to share with fellow community members via a Virtual Altar, re-creating online the sense of one enormous, animated altar so tangible in past years in the Wychwood Barns.

Also on offer on **October 29** will be a *papel picado* tutorial—friends and family can connect digitally to cut the intricate and beautiful traditional designs into colourful tissue paper.





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As always, “community” here includes not only those of Mexican or Latinx heritage. While Day of the Dead is deeply rooted in Mexican culture and history, the Collective considers the celebrations to be of Toronto: anyone interested in understanding and honouring these traditions is part of the community.

Public health guidelines permitting, the Peter MacKendrick Community Gallery at Wychwood Barns will also open its doors to (limited) in-person visitors on **October 29 (5PM to 9PM), October 30 (3PM to 7PM), and October 31 (10AM to 7PM)**. On view will be a Collective visual arts exhibition titled *La Cosecha/Harvesting Bones*.

See the [Día de los Muertos website](#) for the full program and further details as they become available. Please note that public health recommendations may require last-minute changes to programming.

MEDIA INQUIRIES

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