

For Immediate Release

What: Dia de los Muertos procession at U of M, recognizing Latino artists and writers

When: Thursday, November 1, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m.

Where: various locations on east bank campus, beginning at Klaeber Court, 320 16th Ave SE

Who: Representatives from Department of Chicano Studies, Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence, and La Raza Student Cultural Center

How: Free and open to the general public

FFI (public): Department of Chicano Studies, 612-624-6309

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U of M Groups to Present Día de los Muertos Procession

Recognition of political and social challenges preserves and informs traditional ritual

Minneapolis, MN (October 22, 2007)—Students, faculty and staff will celebrate Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) on Thursday, November 1 beginning at noon on the University of Minnesota east bank campus. A procession will travel across campus, stopping at hand-made altars that both remember lost loved ones and address the theme of Latino artists and writers. This event is sponsored by the Department of Chicano Studies, the Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence, and La Raza Student Cultural Center.

Each of the colorful altars in the procession honors a particular Latino artist. This year's honorees are Miguel Piñero, a Nuyorican poet; Chicana writer and activist Gloria Anzaldua; and Mexican artist Frida Kahlo. Along with tributes to these people are commemorations of loved ones who have departed. Items placed on the altars include candles; flowers; and /ofrendas/ (offerings) that commemorate the dead, such as tobacco, beans or other natural items. The procession will include costumed participants and the public is invited to join in and bring a memento and/or light a candle to a loved one and place it on the altar as a way of honoring their memory and evoking their presence.

Gloria Anzaldua was a Chicana lesbian <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbian>> feminist <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminist>> writer, poet, scholar and activist. Her book /Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza <[http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza &action=edit](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Borderlands/La_Frontera:_The_New_Mestiza&action=edit)>/ was recognized as one of the 38 best books of 1987 by /Library Journal/ and 100 Best Books of the Century by both /Hungry Mind Review/ and /Utne Reader <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utne Reader](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utne_Reader)>/. She died in 2004. Miguel Piñero was a

Puerto Rican <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Rico> playwright <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Playwright>>, actor <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Actor>>, and co-founder of the Nuyorican Poets Cafe <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuyorican_Poets_Cafe>. He died in 1988. Frida Kahlo is the most famous female artist in Mexico's history.

The schedule for the Día de los Muertos procession:

12:00: Opening remarks, presentation of altar's topic, Multicultural Center for Academic Excellence, Klaeber Court, 320 16th Ave SE

12:10: Procession to Department of Chicano Studies, Scott Hall, 72 Pleasant Street SE

12:35: Procession to La Raza Student Cultural Center, 211 Coffman Union, 300 Washington Avenue SE

1:00-1:30: Poetry of the Dead, with traditional hot chocolate and /pan de muerto/ (La Raza)

What is Día de los Muertos? Day of the Dead?

The Day of the Dead is a tradition that dates back to the ancient civilization of the Aztecs. This tradition was originally held during the Aztec month of Miccailhuitontli, which falls during the months of July and August. After the arrival of the Spanish, the Christian church converted the tradition to fit their tradition of All Saints Day, or El Día de Todos los Santos. On November 1, we celebrate El Día de los Angelitos, "the day of the little angels," referring to children under the age of 12 who have passed away. November 2 is El Día de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead), or Día de Todos los Santos (All Saints Day).

During these two days, it is custom to honor the people who have passed away with flowers called zempaxochitl, or marigold flowers. The dead are celebrated not only with flowers, but also with the cleaning of graves and altars that have ofrendas (offerings) for the dead. The offerings consist of el pan de muerto (the bread of the dead), sugar skulls, copal incense, velas (candles), favorite foods and favorite things. The offerings are done so that the dead may once again enjoy the things that they once loved. El Día de los Muertos is a day to remember our loved ones who have left the world of the living with stories and good things about them and by rejoicing in the idea that they will be enjoying their favorite things once again.

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