



Breckenridge  
Creative Arts  
**breckcreate.org**

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TO BE RELEASED:  
September 27, 2022

**BRECKENRIDGE CREATIVE ARTS PRESENTS**  
**8<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS FESTIVAL**  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SUMMIT FOUNDATION AND SUMMIT COUNTY GOV.  
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14 - SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2022  
FREE FAMILY ACTIVITIES ON THE ARTS DISTRICT CAMPUS  
MORE INFORMATION AT [BRECKCREATE.ORG](https://breckcreate.org)



**WHAT:** Día De Los Muertos  
**WHEN:** Friday, October 14 - Sunday, October 16, 2022  
**WHERE:** Arts District Campus  
**PRICE:** FREE | All Ages  
**LEARN MORE:** [breckcreate.org](https://breckcreate.org) | [Facebook](#)

**September 27, 2022, Breckenridge, Colo.:** BreckCreate invites the community to attend the 8th annual Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) festival, a three-day commemoration of Day of the Dead featuring hands-on folk-art workshops, face painting, contemporary art exhibitions, and Aztec Grupo Huitzilopochtli dance performances on the Arts District Campus in downtown Breckenridge, plus a mobile ofrenda inside the AirStage. Keep reading for more information, including the full schedule. The schedule is also available at [breckcreate.org](https://breckcreate.org).

“At BreckCreate we believe a strong, healthy community is one that celebrates together, where people from different backgrounds feel free to gather, share cultural experiences and celebrate life,” says Tamara Nuzzaci Park, president and CEO of BreckCreate. “This is our programming mantra for the Día de los Muertos festival, and we have a wonderful weekend in store for everyone.”

Día de los Muertos is a lively celebration in Mexican culture that honors loved ones who have passed. The tradition predates Mexican culture, and it has been celebrated throughout Latin America for centuries; it combines the ancient Aztec custom of paying tribute to their ancestors with All Souls’ Day, which the Spanish colonizers imported to the Americas during the 1500s, according to *National Geographic*. In Mexico, this joyful celebration happens each year on November 1 and 2 through the creation of calaveras de azúcar (sugar skulls), altares de muertos (altars of the dead) and ofrendas (offerings). A festive and social occasion, Día de los Muertos welcomes the return of those who have died and recognizes the cycles of life and death.

“Recently the holiday has also been adopted by many in the U.S. as a way to honor deceased loved ones, transcending cultural barriers,” says Dr. Renee Fajardo, the director of Metropolitan State University (MSU) Denver Department of Chicano/a Studies and a key partner who helps BreckCreate program the festival.

In fact, five organizations partner with BreckCreate to produce the Día de los Muertos festival: the Chicano Humanities Arts Council (CHAC), MSU Denver Chicana/o Studies Department, Colorado Folk Arts Council, Aztec Grupo Huitzilopochtli (Dr. Fajardo represents these four organizations), and the Mexican Cultural Center (MCC). BreckCreate began a partnership with MCC in 2017, and has been working with the rest of the organizations since 2014, the inaugural year of the festival.

“The Mexican Cultural Center is delighted to continue to partner with BreckCreate to celebrate Día de los Muertos with Summit County Residents,” says Jesse Martinez, executive director of the MCC. The MCC will be transforming the AirStage, BreckCreate’s 1975 Airstream Ambassador trailer that serves as a mobile stage, into an “ofrenda on wheels,” Martinez says. The AirStage Ofrenda will provide the community with an authentic example of Día de los Muertos tradition and invite the community to participate in this part of the celebration. The AirStage Ofrenda “will showcase not only this beautiful and magical part of our culture, it will also help culturally educate every family generation through this immersive experience,” Martinez says.

In addition to the AirStage Ofrenda, the MCC will program a full day of workshops and host the Mexican Cultural Center market on Sunday, October 16th. Martinez points to the shared values and common ground that the MCC finds with BreckCreate as a producing partner and commends the organization for making the celebration accessible to the community: The AirStage Ofrenda will travel around the county, offering an interactive component to audiences along the way. Dr. Fajardo also underscores the importance of this partnership because it shines a light on Summit County's own Latinx population.

"Breckenridge's Día de los Muertos celebrations are important, not only because they address the universal desire to pay tribute to those who have passed, but also because these celebrations provide an opportunity to understand and support (Summit) County's growing Latinx population," says Dr. Fajardo. According to Dr. Fajardo, the Latinx population in Summit County has nearly doubled from nine percent to 17 percent between the years 2000 and 2021.

"Latinx residents are the backbone of the workforce in Summit County and surrounding areas," Dr. Fajardo says. "Celebrants who are visiting Breckenridge and non-Latinx residents can experience this small community's commitment to honoring the diversity of the people who call Breckenridge home. By encouraging cultural sensitivity, educating the public with regard to Día de los Muertos traditions, and including partnerships with outside Latinx artists/organizations, Breckenridge has pushed beyond the mere commercialization of Día de los Muertos to create a community dialogue."

This year is especially significant because the festival will honor two luminaries who have been instrumental in the Día de los Muertos legacy: the iconic CHAC founder and Chicano artist Stevon Lucero and Raúl Chavez, the founder and Capitán of Aztec Grupo Huitzilopochtli. Lucero was a featured artist for the 2017 Día de los Muertos festival in Breckenridge. He passed away in the fall of 2021. Work by both he and his wife, Arlette Lucero, will be featured at the 2022 festival. Chavez passed away in May of 2022, and Aztec Grupo Huizilopochtli will have the opportunity to celebrate his legacy in Breckenridge, a place he loved dearly, Dr. Fajardo says.

Cal Duran, who represents the younger generation of CHAC artists and an artist of great talent, also will be featured. "We hope to fully immerse the community in an interactive collaborative journey that explores the history, traditions, and the evolution of Día de Los Muertos," Dr. Fajardo says. The organizations that Dr. Fajardo represents will bring more than 60 artists, danzantes, and students to the festival to "help facilitate a truly unique and breathtaking Día de Los Muertos extravaganza," Dr. Fajardo says.

The 8th annual Día de los Muertos celebration in Breckenridge will provide the opportunity for community members to explore and celebrate connections to their own pasts through provocative art exhibitions and artist talks, the mobile and immersive AirStage Ofrenda, live traditional folk music, ancient Aztec dance performances, and creative workshops on the topics of collage, sugar skulls, masks, dance, and cards.

“This year as the partners unveil the Día de los Muertos experience, we hope that the commentary of the altar/art exhibitions will give historical insight into Día de los Muertos,” Dr. Fajardo says. “Over the years there has been a continued evolution of how (the tradition) is celebrated, yet one thing remains constant, the celebration always reflects the needs of the communities who are celebrating this sacred holiday. In addition, the partners hope to provide some guidance regarding simple protocols to help ensure that the holiday is celebrated with respect and dignity. There are many nuances in celebrating Día de los Muertos; BreckCreate has taken a bold step to address this complexity head-on, something that is oftentimes overlooked.”

The full schedule is outlined below. Workshops are first come, first served.

### Ongoing

#### *Recuerdos: Weaving the Dream*

Oct 6 – Nov 13 | Old Masonic Hall

In partnership with the Chicano Humanities Arts Council

Many cultures now embrace Día de los Muertos as a time to remember and honor deceased loved ones, but it is more than that. It is a chance to explore the dream of who and where we came from. *Recuerdos: Weaving the Dream* features work by Cal Duran, Arlette Lucero, and Stevon Lucero. Together, the artists weave a spiritual journey into the sacred dream of our mortality.

#### *AirStage Ofrenda*

On view daily Oct 14 – 16 | Ridge Street Square

In partnership with the Mexican Cultural Center

An immersive installation by Adrian Marban inside BreckCreate’s retrofitted 1975 Airstream trailer. Step into a world honoring the dead, featuring characters and symbols from Mexican folklore. In addition to the Arts District Campus, the AirStage Ofrenda will travel beyond Breckenridge to neighboring spaces in Summit County during the month of October.

### Friday, Oct 14

#### *Opening Night*

Old Masonic Hall

6 p.m. - Recuerdos Artist talk with Arlette Lucero, Cal Duran, and Dr. Renee Fajardo

5:30-7:30 p.m. – Live music with Judah Arrington

### Saturday, Oct 15

#### *Honoring Memory - Ofrenda Coloring and Collage Activity*

10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. | Robert Whyte House

Learn about the symbolism and Día de los Muertos tradition by creating your own altar in honor of someone or something you care about. Led by BreckCreate Artist-in-Residence Stephanie Mercado, participants can insert photos of the person they want to honor using paper frames, and learn how to adorn a traditional altar. Activity sheets with Día de los Muertos iconography provided.

### *Sugar Skulls*

10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. | Upstairs Old Masonic Hall + Ridge Street Square

This workshop introduces the customs of Día de los Muertos and the symbolism of the sugar skull. Participants will be taken through the sugar skull making process step by step, then create their very own skull art. All materials provided.

### *Katrina Masks + Loteria Cards*

10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. | Randall Art Barn

Loteria is a game of chance that uses images on a deck of cards. Mask making is an ancient form of celebration and reverence in Mexico. Choose to make a Loteria Card or a Katrina mask inspired by printmaker Jose Posada's iconic 1913 character. All materials provided.

### *Grupo Huitzilopochtli Dance Performances*

Teaser 12:30 p.m. | Blue River Plaza

Full performance 2 p.m. | Ridge Street Square

Grupo Huitzilopochtli's Battle Dance is based on Aztec mythology and portrays two Aztec warriors. When one of the warriors perishes, his soul is greeted by another who leads him to his next life in the Aztec underworld of Mictlan, where the dead dwell. The sequence ends when the souls who reside in Mictlan perform the Día de los Muertos Dance.

### *Grupo Huitzilopochtli Dance Workshop*

3 p.m. | Ridge Street Square

Learn the history and significance of the danza to Día de Los Muertos.

### *Artist Demonstration: Cal Duran*

3 p.m. | Old Masonic Hall Patio

Exhibiting artist Cal Duran provides insight into the process of making a Día de los Muertos ofrenda, or altar, in this demonstration. Duran mixes traditional practices with contemporary ones and activates all of the symbolic elements that go into an ofrenda.

### Sunday, Oct 16

#### *Honoring Memory - Ofrenda Coloring and Collage Activity*

10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. | Robert Whyte House

Learn about the symbolism and Día de los Muertos tradition by creating your own altar in honor of someone or something you care about. Led by BreckCreate Artist-in-Residence Stephanie Mercado, participants can insert photos of the person they want to honor using paper frames, and learn how to adorn a traditional altar. Activity sheets with Día de los Muertos iconography provided.

#### *Pan de Muerto*

10 a.m., 2 p.m. | Old Masonic Hall Upstairs Gallery

In this workshop, participants make and learn the history behind Pan de Muerto, a sweet bread decorated with bone-shaped pieces.

### *Nichos*

10 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m. | Randall Art Barn

Nichos are shadow-box style frames that serve as mini ofrendas or altars to take home. Each workshop includes a short presentation about Día de los Muertos and Nichos.

### *Face Painting*

10 a.m. – 2 p.m. | Ridge Street Square

Payasita Paletita, also known as Lollipop, provides face painting and can pose for photos with other Catrinas and Calaveras.

### *Mexican Cultural Center Market*

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. | Ridge Street Square

The Mexican Cultural Center Market features traditional Día de los Muertos gifts and ornaments as well as other traditional Mexican goods, including Pan de Muerto.

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**ABOUT BRECKENRIDGE CREATIVE ARTS:** Breckenridge Creative Arts, a.k.a. BreckCreate, aims to build a dynamic, year-round creative community within Breckenridge. The organization's mission is to deliver inspiring creative experiences that enrich the quality of life for residents and quality of place for visitors via live performances, exhibitions, screenings, classes, workshops and other engagement opportunities throughout Breckenridge, Colorado. BreckCreate's core attractions are the Riverwalk Center and a lively Arts District campus of renovated historic structures that now function as studio spaces for classes and workshops as well as affordable rentals by local artists and visiting artist-in-residence participants. The Breckenridge Arts District is a certified district within the Colorado Creative Industries [Creative District](#) program. For more information regarding events and programming, please visit our [website](#).