

DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS at the Rinconcito de Esperanza on the Westside of San Antonio on Tuesday, November 1st was a turning point for future Muertos' celebrations of the Esperanza. The weeks leading up to it—



Photo: Jessica Gonzáles

mujeres from Mujerartes' clay cooperative with members of the Corazones group of the Casa de Cuentos [elders who come together monthly to preserve cultural traditions and share community cuentos] plus other buena gente worked with Bernard Sánchez to dye wood shavings and sawdust that they used to fill in a floor length tapete or carpet with the Esperanza's Katrina image designed by Mary Agnes Rodríguez.

The tapete graced the entrance into the Rinconcito leading to the backyard where the new Mujerartes earth block building is being finished.

A series of workshops were offered for the Dead celebration at the Rinconcito, the Esperanza, and libraries during the week before and after the Muertos celebration. Flower

making was taught by Guadalupe Segura while molding sugar skulls and cutting papel picado were offered by Angie Merla. Blanca Rivera taught altar making resulting in over 20 altars being set up by community members at the Casa de Cuentos and the Casita. A Queer ofrenda organized by staff member, Natalie Rodríguez with the Queer Corazones group was also included. A face painting workshop by Laura Rios Ramírez trained volunteers to paint calavera faces on children and adults at the event.



Photo: Jessica Gonzáles

Students at all levels participated in this year's Day of the Dead festivities: Lanier High School students made calavera masks with Andi Lin-García as did students at J.T. Brackenridge Elementary. Lanier students learned to write calaveras and literary ofrendas with Esperanza staff members, Eliza Pérez and Jessica González, who took November Calavera issues of La Voz to show examples of such writing. UTSA students in Lilliana Saldaña's class dropped by the Rinconcito on Sunday to help in the preparation of flowers (cempasuchitl) for the ofrendas—wrapping cans in foil and cutting and assembling the flowers in vases and other containers.



Photo: Jessica Gonzáles

¡GRACIAS, BUENA GENTE!

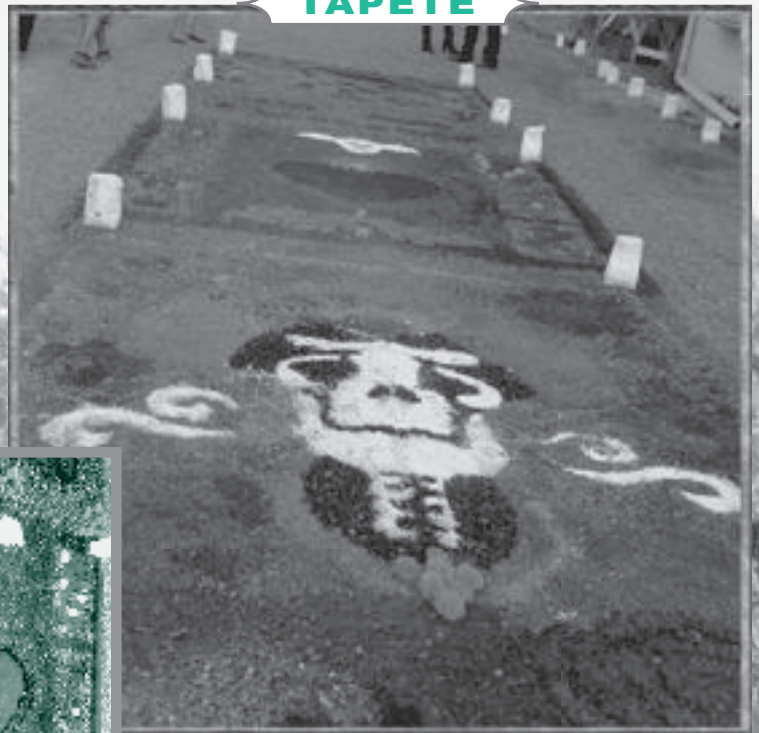


Photo: Mary Agnes Rodríguez



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The day of the muertos festivities included a fun-filled procession of calacas gigantes and calavera faces walking through the Alazán-Apache Courts with “musical” accompaniment. Performances at the event included the annual serenade by Las Tesoros de San Antonio, dancing and music by Tallercito de Son, and accordion music by Conjunto to Heritage Taller. A special appearance by Santiago Jimenez, recent recipient of the 2015 National Medals of Arts, got people up and onto the dance floor!

Calavera readings, poetry and storytelling rounded out the evening with tamales, chocolate and pan de muerto enjoyed by the audience sitting at small cabaret tables watching dancers swirl to the beat of conjunto as the night fell. ¡Que en paz descansen, muertos! RIP!

Santiago Jimenez, Jr.



Photo: Raul Solis

Joaquin



Photo: Olga Crespin



Mario Carbajal • Janeth Valdez • Elva Treviño • Rachel Jennings • Blanca Rivera • Jaime Rivera • Tamera Ford & Lanier Police Explorers • Paul & Mary Esperiqueta • Raul Solis • Robert & Yvonne Rendón • Tomasa Torres • Lilliana Saldaña (UTSA) students • Lyn McWhite • Mozelle Moreno • Claudine • Alicia Arendondo • Arcili Herrera • Mary Agnes Rodríguez • Mike Sánchez • Lyn Watson • Elizandro Carrington • Elizabeth Delgado • Olivia Martínez • Ruben García • Rose García • Cleo Hernández • Lupe (OLLU) • Ruby (OLLU) • Luz Torres • Angie Merla • Jimmy Kitchen • Mildred Hilbrich • Andi Linn -García • Guadalupe Segura . Photographers: Jessica Gonzáles, Mary Agnes Rodríguez, Raul Solis, & Olga Crespin.