

# Abra-Zine!

FALL 2015

ISSUE NO. 9

DAY OF THE DEAD

COVER ART BY VIKKI YEATES

**PAST LIFE  
TAROT  
WITH  
JANACE  
MARIE**

**Darius  
Conway  
Remembers  
Wes Craven**

**Art, Shrines  
and Sugar  
Skulls  
Joni Berte's  
Colorful  
Mundo de  
Muerte**

**Avinash Patel Photography  
Presents "La Calavera"**

**Thinning of the Veil  
Preparations with  
Simply Gabrielle  
PLUS:  
Day of the Dead  
Oil Recipe!**

**NIKKI  
NURTURES  
HELPS US  
DEAL WITH  
DEATH**

**In Travel:  
Dee Carubia  
Celebrates  
With the  
Spirits of  
Santa Fe,  
New Mexico**

**PLUS:  
ART, POETRY  
STORIES,  
RECIPES  
AND MORE!**

**MUSICA DE MUERTE  
PLAYLIST INSIDE!**



June 30th

Am I you  
so cast

I love the  
dark  
light

Not yet

that my life was always

Yeah you taught me wrong  
from right And now I miss  
my teeth every night

And they always let me down  
I need you baby  
Now is this infatuation  
So don't say maybe  
Or just my  
Imagination

stick with you  
used to think  
some girls were  
so cruel  
Stick with me  
I used to think you  
girls were really the  
most But I  
know better now  
I always wished and I  
always hoped

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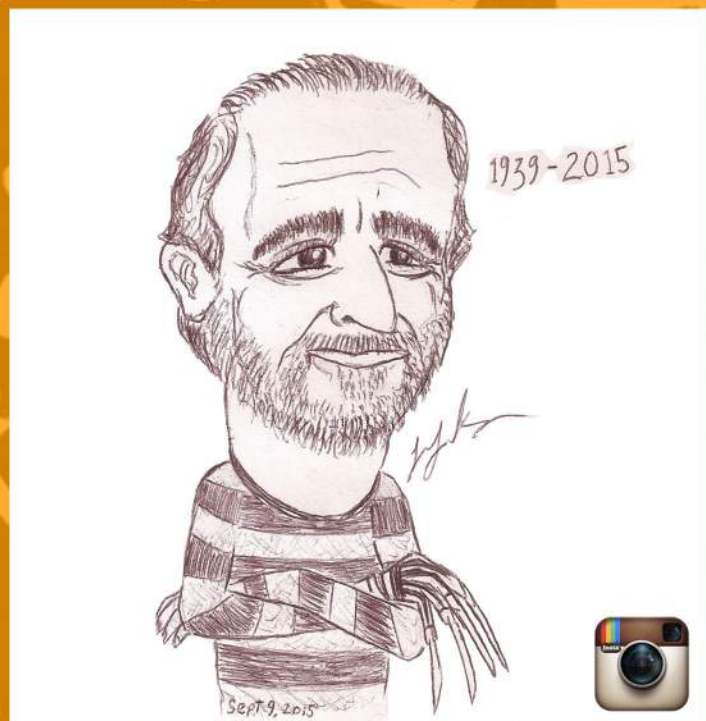
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# CREDITS



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ISSUE Playlist!

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35, 36, 44, 48, 49

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## Background Art

"Depths of Midnight" by Allie Hartley

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## ON THE COVER



"SUGAR SKULLS"  
BY VIKKI YEATES  
[VIEW FULL PORTFOLIO](#)

READ MORE ABOUT VIKKI  
ON PAGES 14 - 15

LISTEN TO OUR DAY OF THE  
DEAD PLAYLIST ON



COMMENTS? QUESTIONS?  
[EMAIL US! INFO@ABRAZINE.COM](mailto:info@abrazine.com)

"Abra-zine"'s mission is to showcase and promote the amazing artistic talent and inspiration from all over the globe! We find all of our contributors through word of mouth, personal connections, or through scouting on social media. At anytime throughout the issue, when you see the interactive buttons, please click on them to take you to a contributor's external websites. Below are just a few of the common ones you will see!



# editor's note



F

ALL IS HERE ALREADY! IT IS ABOUT THAT TIME, WHEN WE SETTLE INTO THE DARKNESS AS THE MONTHS GROW COLDER. THE TREES BECOME BARREN AS THE FIERY LEAVES FALL FROM THEIR BRANCHES, SCATTERING ABOUT ON THE GROUND LIKE MISMATCHED JIGSAW PUZZLE PIECES. NATURE BECOMES LIFELESS AND WHILE THAT'S DEPRESSING TO SOME, IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL FOR ANY SORT OF GROWTH COME SPRING TIME. TOWARD THE END OF PRODUCTION ON OUR SUMMER (FREEDOM) ISSUE THIS PAST YEAR, I WAS REALLY STRUGGLING TO FIND A UNIQUE THEME SURROUNDING THE AUTUMN SEASON, THAT WASN'T YOUR TYPICAL DARK AND DISMAL DEATH ROUTE. DON'T GET ME WRONG, I'M ALL FOR THE DARKNESS AND SUPER MACABRE BUT I FELT LIKE WE NEEDED TO SURROUND OUR "SPIRIT SEASON" THIS YEAR, WITH A THEME THAT BROUGHT MORE LIGHT TO THESE THEMES. HALLOWEEN, SAMHAIN, THE DAY OF THE DEAD, ALL SAINT'S DAY, HALLOWMAS, ALL HALLOW'S EVE... WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT- IT IS THIS SPOOKY TIME OF YEAR THAT ENCOURAGES US TO CONNECT WITH OUR LOVED ONES WHO HAVE PASSED ON BEYOND OUR PHYSICAL PLANE. HOWEVER, IT IS THIS TIME THAT ALSO FORCES US TO TAKE A LOOK AT OUR OWN MORTALITY. LET'S FACE IT... THAT CAN BE A PRETTY MORBID THING!

THAT IS WHAT ALWAYS FASCINATED ME ABOUT THE MEXICAN CULTURE OF DIA DE LOS MUERTOS (DAY OF THE DEAD). IT IS THIS CULTURE THAT IS ABLE TO TAKE SOMETHING SO DARK AND MOURNFUL, AND MAKE IT INTO A BRIGHT CELEBRATION OF LIFE BEYOND DEATH. THEY DON'T SEE DEATH AS SOMETHING THAT IS LIFE-ENDING, BUT RATHER A TRANSITION OR EXTENSION INTO A DIFFERENT REALM OF LIFE BEYOND THE PHYSICAL PLANE. THROUGH THE ALTARS (OFRENDAS) THEY BUILD, THE COLORFUL ART THEY MAKE (SUGAR SKULLS AND CALAVERAS), AND THE MUSIC THEY PLAY AND SING, THE MEXICAN CULTURE EMBRACES DEATH AS A PART OF LIFE. IT IS ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL FOR US TO DIE IN ORDER TO BE REBORN AND GROW INTO BETTER VERSIONS OF THE SELVES WE WERE BEFORE (FIGURATIVELY OR EVEN LITERALLY, FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN REINCARNATION). I FEEL THAT THROUGH CREATING ART, WE AS ARTISTS ARE CONSTANTLY REINCARNATING OURSELVES. IT IS A PROCESS, IT IS HOW WE GROW INTO THE ARTISTS AND HUMAN BEINGS WE ASPIRE TO BE. WITHIN THE PAGES THAT FOLLOW, I FEATURE VERY DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES OF MORTALITY, FROM ARTISTS, TO MAGICK WORKERS AND HEALERS, TO POETS, PHILOSOPHERS AND STORYTELLERS FROM ALL AROUND THE GLOBE! EACH OF "ABRA-ZINE!"'S CONTRIBUTORS HAS A VERY DIFFERENT IDEA OF WHAT THEIR "AFTERLIFE" ENTAILS. THERE ARE PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, BUT THE ONE THING WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON IS OUR MORTALITY.

*We only live once, so let's embrace Mexico's ideals of Death and live life as colorfully as we can!*

*justina xoxo*



Art:  
"Charon"  
By Vikki  
Yeates  
(Bath, UK)



**“Death is  
not the  
greatest  
loss in life.**

**The  
greatest  
loss is  
what dies  
inside us  
while we  
live.”**

**- Norman  
Cousins**



"Day of the Dead"  
By Allie Hartley  
(NY, USA)



# The Death of Society

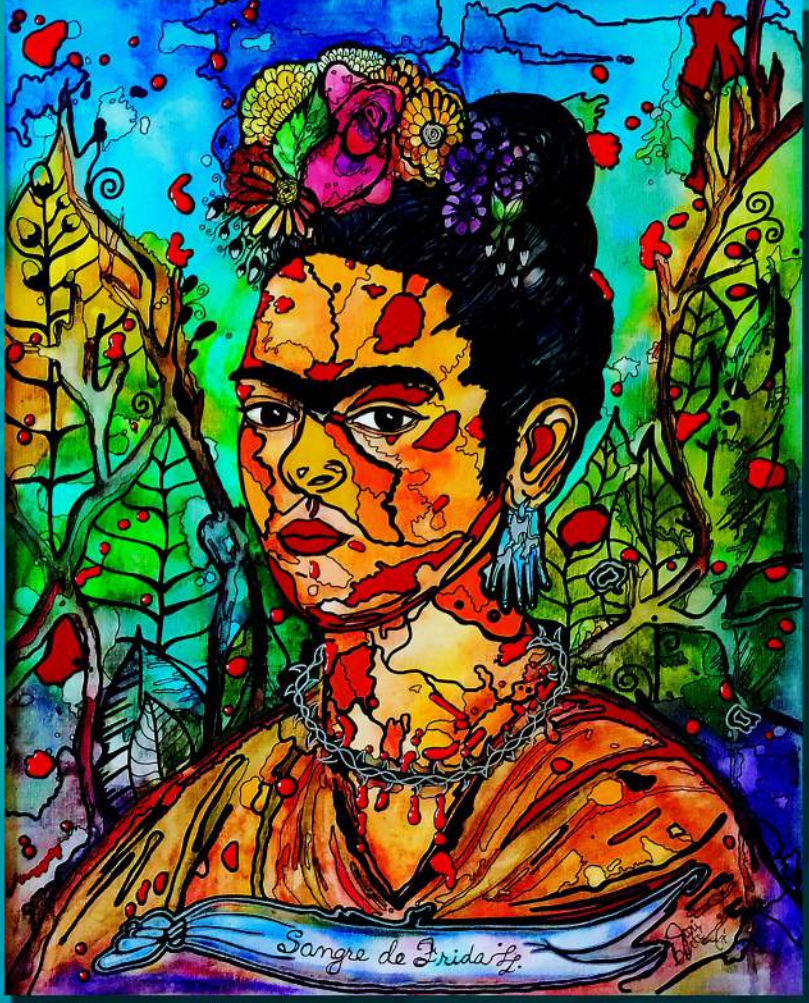
WAITING ON A CHANGE IN AMERICA BY DARIUS CONWAY

The American way of life is a shattered one in our countries. I say "countries" because I am including South American countries as well. Let's pick up the pieces. With the hopes of a new national election ahead of our people, we look into what our 'new' American dream will be and look like. From topics of stabilizing immigration, cultural barriers, currency and the financial market, and equality for the "American Dream", will this be the death of a society or a merge to finally break down walls and become one Americana? We Americans live in a country where "Freedom" is thrown around so much. How free is one in a world where immigrants are treated like peasants to a certain degree? There is a man shouting to deport such people that helped build this great country. How free are we if we, legal citizens, do not help every great person to become a citizen of this great country? Rather than threatening and warning to deport people, I myself call "Adopted Americans", why don't we just figure out a better way to make people feel welcomed in hopes of joining the "Freedom Bandwagon"? If you are an American, your early ancestors were immigrants.

Cultural barriers have existed since the creation of man. The death of cultural barriers will be when hate does not exist anymore. Hate plays mostly in the trails of cultural barriers because of ignorance. The ignorant do not see past their own views. We in America are dealing with very real racial and cultural barriers! Young people are being shot, young women are being killed or murdered in a jail cell, because of her race. How do we get over the constant barriers of what we look like on the outside, rather than what we are from the inside? America needs a big cultural shock and it is happening as we speak! It is our generation's (18 to 30) "Revolution", from #BlackLivesMatter to immigration laws to women's rights. It will determine our future and how we also deal with our country's finances and equality acts and laws. Since the recession in 2008, the dollar in America has become worth more in euros. This has a lot to do with the equality for most people. Equal laws and acts are being passed throughout the country to help Americans feel as one. We are helping build our country and world for the better. With the LGBT community helping to equalize marriage in the United States of America, the economy has boosted. The housing market is up and more Americans are looking for that dream of owning a home and starting a family or a life together. Americans waited on a change for the equality of marriage and to be seen as one. Will we move on as a society or be stuck in time and progress by outdated mindsets, skin tones, or where we came from? Will these differences continue to affect our responsibility to treat each other as equal human beings

Are we waiting on a change or are we the ones that need to change? Is this the death to a society we know as America? Our attitudes towards each other may not have to agree, but we must live and respect each other. We are a product of how we are raised to a certain extent. Cultural, financial, or geographical differences do not determine who we are as humans on the inside. As we wait for and see this change, think about how YOU could make every day better in some way, shape, or form! What can YOU do to make our America and the WORLD a better place? Writing from America NYC, NY! Pray for our country. Pray for our WORLD.

[WWW.DARIUSCONWAYINC.COM](http://WWW.DARIUSCONWAYINC.COM)



# THE LEGACY OF FRIDA KAHLO

*A Tribute to the Mexican  
Goddess of Strength, Passion,  
and Creativity*

By Justina Carubia  
Art by Joni Berte

***“Pain, pleasure and death are no more than a process for existence. The revolutionary struggle in this process is a doorway open to intelligence”***  
— Frida Kahlo, *The Diary of Frida Kahlo: An Intimate Self-Portrait*

A Day of the Dead themed issue would not be complete without a tribute to one of the greatest Mexican artists to have ever lived. Frida Kahlo was only 18 years old when her life changed forever. She was in a horrible trolley car accident that had left her with very severe injuries to her spinal column, collar bone, legs, pelvis, and even her female reproductive system after a handrail pierced her abdomen and uterus. She spent 3 months recovering in a full body cast and took up painting to pass the time and lift her own spirits. It was a form of therapy for her.

Frida is most famous for her whimsical and Mexican Folk style of painting, and she was mostly known for her recognizable self portraits in which she embraced her strong features including her signature unibrow. She had painted at least 140 paintings in her lifetime, about 55 of which are self-portraits. Many of Frida's paintings incorporated symbolic portrayals of the physical and psychological wounds which she endured throughout her lifetime. Due to the accident in her youth, she spent most of her life confined to bed rest or hospitalized for months at a time. She had an average of 35 operations throughout her lifetime, and had even conceived 3 times, but the pregnancies were terminated due to the damage she had suffered from her medical issues relating to that fateful day she endured as an 18 year old.

Most of Frida's paintings were labeled Surrealist from critics, but she insisted, **“I never painted dreams, I painted my own reality.”** Frida's biggest supporter of her art was Mexican muralist and mentor turned lover and life partner, Diego Rivera. They had a very troubled relationship and marriage as they were both unfaithful to each other throughout the many years they were together. Frida had also completely embraced her own bisexuality as some of her affairs had been with women.

In July 1952, Frida's right lower leg was amputated due to gangrene and became ill with bronchopneumonia which left her frail for the remainder of her life. She died of a pulmonary embolism on July 13, 1954 at the age of 47 and was cremated as she wished. A few days before her death, she wrote in her diary: **“I hope the exit is joyful - and I hope never to return - Frida”.**

To this day, the work of Frida Kahlo continues to be celebrated by aspiring artists and lovers of the Mexican culture and folk traditions, from all around the globe. She had a vibrant and creative life filled with beautiful art and passionate love, but it was also filled with a lot of pain, grief, betrayal, and sadness. She really acknowledged her humanity and her own mortality in her paintings, and didn't shutter to confront those topics that made life so hard for her. It's how she dealt, and because of this, she remains an inspiration to all who find meaning in her work, **“Ahora, y Para Siempre...”**



"Danse  
Macabre"  
By Allie  
Hartley  
(NY, USA)



## THE ROAD TO CLOSURE: LEARNING TO DEAL WITH DEATH IN YOUR OWN WAY BY NICOLE LEE AGUILAR



My family has this terrible habit of never telling me when things are wrong with someone. I know I'm the emotionally unstable one of the family, but it's always worse to blindside me with bad news, than it is to just come out and say something is not going so well. I don't remember the exact date... It may have been Dec. 17th of 2011? I'm not one to remember a "Deathiversary". That's really dark and morbid. Living in California with my entire family in New Jersey, meant that I would call and check in all the time. I knew, the moment NO ONE in my entire family answered my call that day, that there was something wrong. I eventually got a call back. I don't remember if it was my mother or my aunt, but apparently Tia, my Great Aunt had fallen and was in the hospital. She was diabetic, so any time there was a break of the skin, she had to go as a precaution. She was in her 90s, so I didn't really think anything of it. But something in their voice was hiding something. The rest of the conversation is kind of a blur. I remember hanging up and just waiting. All of a sudden I got a text saying that they were removing the central line and that she was in God's hands. WHAT?! I thought she fell. What the hell is going on? Why is no one telling me the truth? There was just a rush of emotions. I felt Tia slipping. All the way from California, I felt it. Apparently, she had a UTI that went septic. It happened quickly--Too quickly for me to get there. The words "You'll never make it here" still ring through my head till this day. They cut my heart like a knife.

To say that I was taken over by grief would be an understatement. I couldn't breathe. My heart hurt. Tia and I were very close; almost kindred spirit-like close. I knew she didn't understand why I wanted to live so far away, but she supported me in doing so. I felt like I wasn't there for her. I was 3,000 miles away when she was leaving and I was helpless. Even writing this, brings back that God-awful feeling. I hadn't lost anyone in my family since her husband, my Uncle Charlie, when I was about 7 years old. I wasn't prepared to deal with this. I flew home for the wake and funeral. It was the most difficult thing I ever had to do and I can't remember most of those two days. Is it wrong that I'd rather not? My family tried their best to console me, knowing how close I was with her, but nothing was helping this feeling I had. It was a feeling that wasn't explained to me until two years later.



After returning back to California, that feeling of something missing lingered and lingered long. It wasn't your typical sense of loss-- It was something much deeper, but I also felt Tia's presence like her death never happened. I lit a candle for her for a few nights and I remember several times, a feeling of someone sitting on my bed while I slept. I would wake up feeling alarmed, but then quickly felt soothed. These feelings would last, but I learned how to live with them.

I met my now boyfriend in 2012, not quite a year after her passing. (I do believe she brought the perfect guy into my life). He was religious and asked me to go to church with him. We were the same religion, but I was in a "Pissed off at God" point in my life and I was honest with him as to why. I did go to church with him one Sunday and of course, the priest drove some words straight through my heart. He was speaking of how selfish it is for us to want to keep people around forever. It's hard to lose our loved ones but "No one loves them more than God and he's calling them home." I was so choked up, I remember not even being able to say "Peace" with my boyfriend. The words healed me a little bit, but there was something still off, something I was still carrying with me. A lot of it was guilt-- Guilt for not being there. But there was also something else gnawing at my soul that I just couldn't put a finger on.

A year later, a friend of mine was coming in from Texas to visit. She had her massage table with her and was ready to do sound healing, Reiki, massage... you name it, she had the healing power to do it. I expressed my feelings to her about everything I was carrying: the emptiness, the feeling of something missing, the feeling that I could not get closure from this unexpected death. Without missing a beat she said, "I can sense that you were sisters in your past life and this is history repeating itself. You lost her unexpectedly then and again now. So you really are missing a piece of yourself." YES! A part of myself went with her that day. I finally understood all of those feelings. I cried, laid on the table and she went to work. Sound bowls, singing and chanting, balancing chakras... afterwards, I felt completely at ease. But then days later, the gnawing started again. A few years later, I was in a purgatory state in life. I had quit my job and was gearing up to move to Northern California with my boyfriend. I had a lot of time to sit and let my own thoughts fester. Tia came back to my mind in full force. A friend's sister is a Psychic Medium and had done readings for a few friends. They had nothing but good things to say about her. I scheduled a reading. This is something that I wouldn't have done initially because when you come from a Catholic family this is the ultimate NO-NO! Then I grew up, moved out and formed my own beliefs and opinions. So, I didn't feel bad for doing something that I felt like I needed for closure. Who knew if Tia would even come through for me, but I needed to try something. She did come through that day and offered the closure I needed. I won't go into detail about what was said, but I know it was her and even on the other side, she was hesitant to talk to the medium. Uncle Charlie was with her. So if you ever wondered if couples link back up in the after-life, they do. I was completely exhausted and emotionally drained after the reading, but it was so worth it.

When I look back at the few years it took for me to be ok with losing Tia, it seems like a long time to feel grief, but everyone is different. That's why I wrote this article. Whatever you need to do to gain closure is ok. You will heal yourself in your own way and your own time. I think as humans, we worry way too much about what others think and say to us and it gets in the way of how we live. I'm sure some of my family is reading this, rolling their eyes at me, but what I care about is that I'm ok now. I can talk about her without crying and basically have quiet conversations with her because I know she is there and she is listening. It will always be strange to no longer have our loved ones on the physical plane, but for me, it helped so much to know they are there in the spiritual sense. You can believe whatever you want, but this is how I get through my days without her. The process I went through is how I've been able to live my day-to-day life.



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# "La Calavera"

## THE ORIGINS OF EMBODIMENT

PHOTOGRAPHY AND EDITORIAL BY AVINASH PATEL

MODELED AND STYLED BY JUSTINA CARUBIA

El Día de los Muertos, The Day of the Dead, is a holiday observed in various regions of Mexico, particularly the central and southern regions. The three-day celebration begins on October 31, All Hallows Eve, followed by All Saints Day, and ending with All Souls Day on November 2. On All Hallows Eve, children are encouraged to create a children's altar inviting all the angelitos, the spirits of deceased children, to come back and visit their friends and families. During All Saints Day, November 1, the adult spirits are encouraged to visit. On the final day, All Souls Day, friends and family gather to decorate the graves and tombs of their lost loved ones. The entire celebration is often accompanied by an abundance of marigolds (the flowers of the dead), pan de muerto (the bread of the dead), sugar skulls, skeletons, and other traditional foods and decorations.

One of the most iconic symbols during the Day of the Dead celebrations is La Catrina. Some people refer to La Catrina as a "sugar skull woman", "Day of the Dead Girl", or other variations of the like. The dark beauty of La Catrina originated with an art piece by famous Mexican printmaker, cartoon illustrator, and lithographer José Guadalupe Posada. The zinc etching, created between 1910 and 1913, depicts a female skeleton dressed only in a hat representative of an upper class European woman of her time; justly being titled La Calavera Catrina, or "The Elegant Skull".

Though the character was introduced by Posada, La Catrina was made popular by artist Diego Rivera, husband of Frida Kahlo, in *Sueño de una tarde dominical en la Alameda Central*; a 15 meter long mural.

Inspired by Posada's original etching, Rivera gave new life to La Catrina by giving her a body as well as a glamorous identity of her own. Representing the identity of a "lady of death" as well as a woman of wealth, even La Catrina cannot escape death. Rivera's mural served as a neutralizing force: a reminder that we are all equals in the end.

With Halloween just around the corner, it seemed fitting for me to celebrate El Día de Los Muertos in my own special way. As a photographer, I aim to create emotion through capturing life. I tried to accomplish this by capturing the looming feeling of death and darkness, but also allowing the beauty of La Catrina to also shine through.



The dark beauty of *La Catrina* originated with an art piece by famous Mexican printmaker, cartoon illustrator, and lithographer José Guadalupe Posada. The zinc etching, created between 1910 and 1913, depicts a female skeleton dressed only in a hat representative of an upper class European woman of her time; justly being titled *La Calavera Catrina*, or "The Elegant Skull".

It was absolutely crucial for this shoot to be dark, moody, and dramatic, but at the same time, still represent the colorful vibrancy of life. Enlisting the help of my model/makeup artist Justina, we set out to create a series of portraits that truly embodied the spirit of *La Catrina*. In order to do this, I drew inspiration from artists such as Tim Burton, David La Chapelle, Aaron Nace, as well as various Mexican art pieces.

For me, art is not just the final product, but also the entire creative process leading up to it. I had several visions and looks for this shoot stored in my head, and in conjunction with this, several methods to light the scene with various lighting techniques and modifiers. Even though photography is art for me, I still take a very practical approach to it whenever possible. This means a ton of planning, followed by more planning, and finally execution.

Using the photography knowledge I've gained over the years, I set up a home studio in a way that I knew I would be able to create the looks I was going for. Justina ensured that the makeup and costume would be dark and moody, while still being bright and punchy. It was up to me to determine the best way to allow both aspects of this shoot to come through. I approached this photoshoot with two basic lighting setups. In one instance I used a single off camera flash in a softbox. The other setup was basically the same with the addition of a second off camera flash in a softbox in order to act as a slight rim/separation light. These two setups allowed me to fully light the subject and allow for the dramatic feel I was shooting for.

Armed with a Nikon D600 equipped with a Nikkor 24-70mm f/2.8 lens, I was able to capture frame after frame of the spirit of *La Catrina*. A few single malt scotches and a couple hours in Photoshop allowed me to FULLY capture and bring out the spirit I was looking for. The final images, in my opinion, represent the ominous darkness of the "lady of death", but also bring out the bright celebratory nature of *La Catarina* and *El Día de los Muertos*.

*It took about 2 hours for model Justina Carubia to get into full makeup!*





Inspired by the iconic Virgin of Guadalupe.



Avinash Patel, better known to his friends as "Avi", hails from the small town of South Plainfield, New Jersey. He is an engineer by day, and back in 2010, he began to take interest in photography as a hobby, which resulted in him teaching himself everything he implements into his work today.

Throughout his journey exploring the world of photography, he has developed quite an extensive portfolio, covering all areas of the photography realm from product stills, to food and corporate events, engagement and pregnancy announcements, and even model and fashion portraiture.

His most favorite things to shoot are candid and artistic conceptual pieces which involve creative lighting and post production experimentation such as the "La Calavera" piece he created for this issue!

Avi is currently working on building his photography business! Would you like to work with Avi and get some great shots of you and your milestone? Please visit his website below to view his full portfolio or get in touch with him through the contact link on his menu bar to inquire about pricing!

[WWW.AVINASHPATEL.COM](http://WWW.AVINASHPATEL.COM)



“Drowning”



# INTERVIEW WITH COVER ARTIST VIKKI YEATES

Bath, UK native and cover artist Vikki Yeates has been producing artwork since the early 90s. She describes her work as “Gothic Art” and is inspired by sinister tales and macabre stories. Some of her favorite and most notable paintings are of hares, which are connected to many different meanings and mythologies. Her obsession with them has grown as she is continuously inspired by their magical connotations. She has illustrated children’s books, poetry, and even started on a Tarot Deck! Vikki stops by to chat with us today about the inspiration behind our hauntingly beautiful cover art this issue, and also tells us her thoughts on death, the afterlife, and Halloween costume plans for this year! Please read on!

AZ: Hi Vikki! Your art is amazing! How long have you been creating art? Did you have any formal training or did it come naturally to you?

VY: I’ve been creating art for as long as I can remember; I’ve always liked illustrating other people’s words (i.e. song lyrics) so it was a natural progression to do a degree in Illustration at Brighton University (UK).

AZ: What is it about The Day of the Dead (Dia de los Muertos) that intrigues you enough to have inspired some of the art work that you have created?

VY: I was inspired to do an illustration based on the Day of the Dead, as one of my friends is a big fan and asked me to paint something as a gift for her friends’ Wedding.

AZ: What is your take on death and all that surrounds it? Do you fear death? And what do you believe happens after we pass on?

VY: I tend to be quite rational these days when it comes to death – I fear the effects my death will have on my children, but not death itself. I believe the soul could go on somewhere, but I’m not religious; it’s more of a vague spiritual belief.

AZ: If afterlife does exist, what do you think a day in the afterlife would look, feel, be like?

VY: If the afterlife exists I hope it’s not like the classic heaven idea; I’m quite a rebellious person and I would find that very boring!

AZ: Do you believe in ghosts and have you ever had a real life experience or encounter with a spiritual entity? Please do tell!

VY: I believe in the possibility of ghosts. I like the idea that they could be recordings in time, not interactive at all, just an imprint. And I love ghost stories and supernatural films.

AZ: Who are some of the visual fine artists who have inspired you to create the art in the style that you do? Do you have any mentors that you look up to (real life or virtual) that keep you inspired?

VY: I have so many artists who have inspired me over the years – these are just a fraction of them: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, Kathe Kollwist, Franz Marc, George Grosz, Edvard Munch, Marc Chagall. More modern influences would be Sue Coe and Dave Mckean.



(Vikki's Hare Collection from Left to Right: "Druid Soul", "Witch Maiden", "Jack and Jill", "Poppy").

AZ: You have a very stylized way about your artwork that would look amazing in the form of a Tarot Deck! Have you ever thought about possibly creating your own Tarot Deck or designing art for Tarot Cards at all? Is the Tarot an area of interest for you at all?

VY: I read the Tarot and I started to illustrate a Tarot deck years ago, but stopped halfway through. I would love to illustrate my own bizarre deck at some point, but 78 cards seems such a massive undertaking! I wouldn't have the time right now, unless I was commissioned to do it.

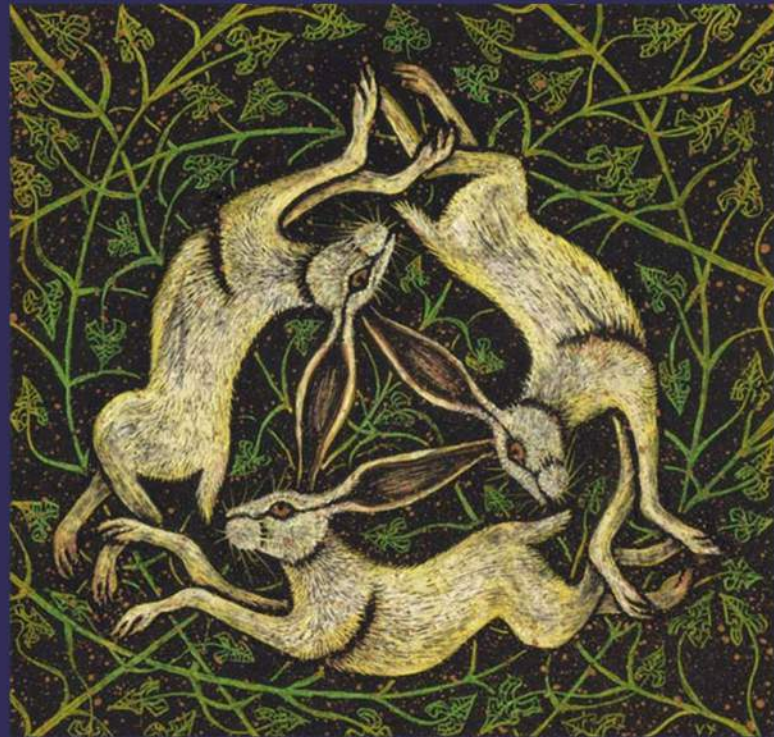
AZ: That's amazing! You should keep at it, your style is perfect for it! What are you going to be for Halloween this year?

VY: For Halloween this year, I will go as a weeping bride, with lots of black dripping tears!

AZ: Oh that sounds so spooky! Thank you so much for chatting with us today!

VY: Thank you for having me!

PLEASE VISIT VIKKI ON HER SOCIAL MEDIA!



## HARE TRIO

The symbol in Vikki's piece "The Hare Trio" features three hares chasing each other in a circle. Each of the ears is shared by two hares, so that only 3 ears are actually shown. This design was found originally in medieval cultures, but the meaning is still unknown, as it has not been explained throughout any contemporary written sources. Some associate its symbolism with mysticism, fertility and the lunar cycle. It has also been used in Christian churches, where it was presumed to be a symbol of the Trinity. It appears in a number of medieval European churches in France (the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourviere in Lyon) and Germany. The motif appears in manuscripts, wood and stone carvings, and window stained glass. Many believe that this particular image rose to popularity due to the nature of its optical illusion. Each rabbit can be individually seen as correct, it is only when you try to see all three at once that you see the problem with defining the hares' ears. The work is compared to the illusion of M.C. Escher.

FOR A MORE IN DEPTH LOOK BEHIND THE SYMBOLOGY AND ORIGINS OF THIS WORK, PLEASE SEE THE WIKIPEDIA PAGE!

Vikki at Beechwoods



# JIMMY NAPPER



NOT  
on  
ONE STRAND  
are all  
LIFE'S JEWELS  
strung

# A DECADENT DECLINE

"The Magpie's Nest"





*29 year old West Sussex, England native Amy Napper has always been somewhat of a dark child who naturally gravitated to the dark and emotive imagery of the Gothic and Macabre! Today, she tells us a little bit about what draws her to the Dia de los Muertos traditions of the Mexican culture, and also talks to us about her own opinions on mortality and her love of punk rock!*

AZ: Hi Amy! Thanks so much for joining us today! How long have you been creating art? Did you have any formal training or did it come naturally to you?

AN: I can't remember a point in my life without art. Creativity flows in my genes, my Mum attended art school and was a florist and my Dad can build anything. From an early age my sister and I entered craft competitions at local village "fetes" (festivals) and art was always my favourite subject at school. As a teenager I was heavily into the local music scene and created many gig posters and band artwork in a simplified graphic style. In 2005 I embarked on a BA in Fine Art at Coventry University where I specialised in painting and mixed media. I had little desire to draw and when I did, it was to begrudgingly tick a box for a lesson module, and not for creative pleasure. Whilst writing my dissertation in my final year I spent a lot of time researching the evolution of the image and became totally enthralled with medieval woodcuts and this inspired me to produce highly decorative graphic drawings in black and white. These drawings perfectly tied in with the gothic and macabre imagery I was producing.

AZ: I see you work mostly in black and white. I am assuming they are inks? What are your favourite brands to work with?

AN: I always plot out my compositions lightly in pencil and then ink them using Sakura Pigma Micron pens. The final images are then scanned into my computer, stitched together in Photoshop and then edited to pure black and white.

AZ: What is it about The Day of the Dead theme that intrigues you enough to have inspired an entire body of such beautifully dark and emotive work?

AN: I have always been a little dark, I used to pester my Mum to buy me the beautiful, black Barbie sized horse and carriage that stood in the window of our local undertaker (I never did get it, apparently a Victorian Funeral Coach was frowned upon for a 9 year old). When I was 18 I started looking at the Mexican tradition of the Day of the Dead and it struck a chord with me. I lost Grandparents at an age where I was old enough to understand the physical nature of death but where I couldn't comprehend the emotional side of dealing with grief and loss (if you ever can.) The Day of the Dead, celebrating and remembering those who have passed seemed like such a beautiful sentiment and obviously the amazingly colourful and extravagantly decorative side of this festival contrasts starkly with the British expression of grief and remembrance. Some people ask me why I'm so obsessed with skulls and death, but I honestly believe that contemplating our own mortality helps you to live life to the fullest and I also think this is represented by the celebration of Dia de los Muertos.

AZ: You have a piece called "Afterlife". Do you fear death? And what do you believe happens after we pass on? Do you believe in the "Afterlife"?

AN: I firmly believe that once we breathe our final breath, that is it. I do not believe in an afterlife but I believe that we live on in what we leave behind. Our actions whilst we are here keep our memory alive in the heart of our loved ones. There is nothing to fear after death, but I do fear having regrets. Nobody knows how long they have; life is so fragile, it should be embraced at every moment.

AZ: Do you have any special sort of altar in your living space, where you can pay your respects or even try to communicate with your ancestors or other spirits who may have special messages for you?

AN: I have photographs of those who I have lost, both family and pets and also some token possessions – my Grandfather's Spitfire model he was awarded after serving with the RAF in Africa during World War Two, and my Grandmother's pocket watch. These things have no real monetary value but I know they meant a great deal to my Grandparents and for that reason I will cherish them.



“Afterlife”

“I honestly believe that contemplating our own mortality helps you to live life to the fullest and I also think this is represented by the celebration of Dia de los Muertos...”

AZ: Do you believe in ghosts and have you ever had a real life experience or encounter with a spiritual entity? Please do tell!

AN: I don't believe in ghosts or the paranormal—although I do enjoy a good horror film but my view is that it's based on fantasy not fact. It's part of human nature to try and explain the inexplicable.

AZ: Your work has a very punk rock vibe to it, and I saw that you do a lot of show fliers for bands. Are you in a band yourself? If so, please tell us a bit about it! If not, your art is obviously influenced by music quite a bit, so please tell us about your favourite bands, the ones that inspire you to create art the most....

AN: I'm not in a band but my fiance is and to a certain degree we met through our mutual love of music. As a teenager I was obsessed with Punk Rock— Bad Religion were my heroes. Their lead singer Greg Graffin is an incredible songwriter and scholar and his exploration of the world through his punk-rock poetry really inspired me to think hard about what it means to exist in this world. I have also been a massive Alkaline Trio fan for a very long time. Their dark, gothic, melodic punk songs still give me goosebumps to this day.

AZ: Who are some of the visual fine artists who have inspired you to create the art in the style that you do? Do you have any mentors that you look up to (real life or virtual) that keep you inspired?

AN: I have had comparisons drawn between my work and Aubrey Beardsley. I definitely combine the flowing, organic lines of Art nouveau with a tinge of punk rock graphics inspired from my obsession of poster artists such as Frank Kozik and Heather Gabel. I find inspiration in gothic architecture and funerary art (living up to the classic cliché of the Goth girl hanging out in grave yards!)

AZ: You obviously love the horror genre... (I LOVE your Frankendolly piece) ... What are some of your favourite horror flicks you grew up on? Who is your favourite monster?

AN: As I grew up I used to (and still do!) love Hocus Pocus. As I got older I loved anything that had a good twist. I'm one of those people who can see a plot twist from the onset; it takes a really good film to keep me entertained. I love the adrenaline rush from the suspense of a scary film. My top 5 horror themed films have to be: Drag Me to Hell, The Evil Dead (original or remake), The Woman in Black, The Cabin in the Woods and of course The Craft.

AZ: Ooh! The Craft is one of my all time favourite movies! What are you going to be for Halloween this year?

AN: I'm spending all day getting ready, dressing up with friends and going to a gig. I'm going to dress as Mrs. Lovett, the pie maker from Sweeney Todd in all her bloody Victorian, gothic splendour.

AZ: That's a great costume! What would you like someone to leave at YOUR Ofrenda to honour you?

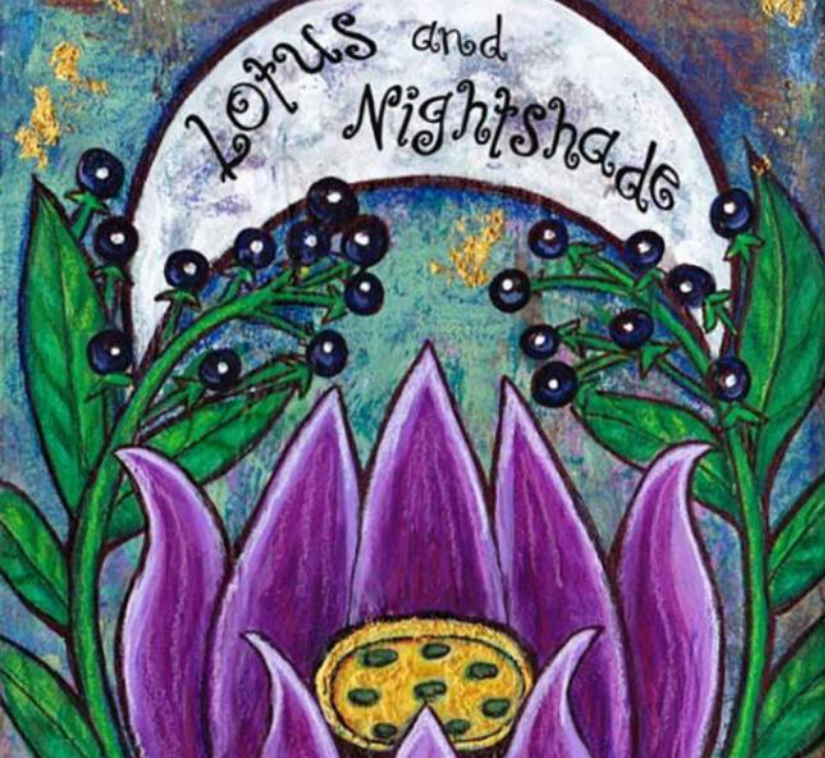
AN: I would love someone to leave one of my drawings and maybe a plant.



Amy Napper's Etsy Shop is Coming Soon!  
Below: "The Seasons"

WWW.AMYNAPPER.COM





## Art Dolls and Other Treasures By Cameron Reutzell

Etsy crafter and Corona, California native Cameron S. Reutzell has been making art dolls inspired by the Mexican tradition of Day of the Dead, almost as if she has been doing it her whole life! You would be so very surprised to learn that she had only been making them for a very short period of time! She has come to develop

her own style and process for creating the dolls, which makes each one extremely unique!

When she initially started creating these dolls, she tweaked a pattern for the bodies that she found in an old doll making book from the 80s, which she picked up at a thrift store! She found the instructions for how to attach the hair, on You Tube. Her sewing skills are self-taught and she still considers herself very much in the exploratory stage of her process. She explains, "I can sew a straight line and can make elastic waistbands. I made the clothes by trying different ways of combining fabric with just those 2 skills." IMPRESSIVE, isn't it?

Cameron's dolls are made from muslin and polyfil. She works on small batches of like items, cutting out the muslin, sewing, and stuffing all 3 dolls at the same time. After the groundwork for each doll is finished, she picks one, and works on it exclusively. This enables her to give each doll all of the focus and attention they need. It is in this step that she creates the details that flesh out the heart and character of the doll, until it is done. She paints her details with acrylic paint and the hair is soft yarn.

For her Frida doll, she sculpted air dry clay over the muslin to create her face and chest. Her hair is synthetic wig hair and 99% of the dress fabrics are from her stash of vintage material.

Cameron tells us, "I have to admit I actually don't know much about Frida. I know she was a strong woman and a prolific artist...but it was her style that I was drawn to for this doll. I wanted an excuse for unapologetic color and flowers and beauty. She, and her iconic unibrow and dangly earrings immediately came to mind." Cameron is not of Mexican descent, but appreciates the beautiful vibrant colors the culture lends to its artwork. She is 1/4 Japanese and the S. of her initials stands for Shizuko, after her grandmother.

In contrary to honoring ancestors with the Ofrenda of Mexican culture, Cameron likes to honor her family in her own special way. "I don't keep an altar, per se, but do have items tucked here and there that keep my loved ones close: my grandmother's childhood stuffed animal in my daughter's room, a drawing my doodle loving grandpa did on the fridge, a broken earring from my mom's mother in my jewelry box; I honor the things that awake memories of them as I go about my day." Cameron believes that death is such a personal thing for each of us. "In my younger days, I used to believe that our time on Earth was all we had. Now...I simply have a hope. Since experiencing loss and becoming a mom, I hope there is more. To have our own unique energetic spark released and reunited with Nature sounds like a wonderful way to carry on to me. To think that a tiny part of me could be in the very atmosphere, being breathed in by all life and making up some of the air my daughter walks through, makes mortality a bit less scary for me." Cameron thinks the absolute best thing that could be offered to her by her loved ones would be a symbol of their own happiness. Maybe a picture of their children, something lovely they created, or a song that always puts them in a good mood. "Having them share the joy in their lives with me would be a wonderful gift!"

Contact Cameron on her Etsy Shop  
or Instagram for Commissions!



[WWW.LOTUSANDNIGHTSHADE.ETSY.COM](http://WWW.LOTUSANDNIGHTSHADE.ETSY.COM)

# CAMERON Q & A

Q: Where did you get the name Lotus and Nightshade, how did it come about?

A: It's funny you ask about my studio name. I just changed it a couple of weeks ago. I had started a blog over 6 years ago during a dark time in my life. I needed a safe place to share my art and feelings, to be gentle with myself and connect with other women. I called it Paint Myself Pretty because I wanted to emphasize to myself that I had the power to decide how I viewed the world....and more importantly, myself. Well, I soon opened an Etsy store and kept the same name to avoid confusion. I have evolved from that insecure person in wonderful ways. I felt it was the right time to call my studio and shop something more in keeping with who I am now. Lotus and Nightshade speaks to me of wisdom and risk....beauty an danger....water and earth.

Q: You create alot of other art beside dolls! Please tell us about some of the other things you create and what are you inspired by?

A: I like to make many different things, from jewelry to original paintings, to embellished denim to sculptures. My inspiration is largely derived from Nature and from my favorite season. My love of Autumn, and all the sights, sounds and aromas that go along with it, has me happily creating characters that live there. Nature, flora and fauna float in and out easily into my work whether it be the subject matter or the materials I collect and use. All of my creations are one-of-a-kind.



"Garden of Eden"  
Watercolor Pencil &  
India Ink on Canvas.



# JONI BERTÉ'S dead man's party

PAPER MACRÉ, SUGAR SKULLS, PERSONAL SHRINES, PAINTINGS AND FUN!

Joni Berte is a vibrant ex-California native (now residing in Jensen Beach, Florida) who became enthralled with the traditions of The Day of the Dead upon a trip to Mexico in 2001. Since then she has been churning out colorful works of art from paintings, to personal shrines and memorial pieces, and even her infamous paper mache sugar skulls, to clients and commissioners all around the globe. She has really made a name for herself amongst Day of the Dead Enthusiasts and talks to us a little bit today about the specific style she has created, that is truly original and all her own. Oh, and did I mention, she is OBSESSED with the musical works of OINGO BOINGO (Danny Elfman's earlier New Wave music project prior to his partnership with director, Tim Burton). Let's see what Joni has to say!

AZ: Hi Joni! Are you of Mexican descent or can you relate personally to any of the cultural traditions that surround Dia de Los Muertos? If so, please tell our readers a little bit about those. If not, what is about the Day of the Dead that intrigues you so much to make such beautiful work surrounding it?

JB: First, thank you for the complement! While not of Mexican descent, I lived in Southern California for over 20 years and was exposed to Day of the Dead traditions via several forays into Mexico. However, I have to give a big shout-out to the 1980's-90's band, Oingo Boingo, and their CD, "Dead Man's Party". I attended their concerts in Los Angeles, on an average of twice a year throughout 1985-95. The music was insanely fun, and their Halloween concerts were epic! Once I made the connection between sugar skulls and dancing skeletons as they related to religious and cultural traditions of Mexico, I became further intrigued with the spiritual component of the holiday – the liminal state between this world and the next, the demimonde, I was totally hooked. As a child and young adult I attended Protestant churches, but never found what I was looking for, spiritually. Although Catholicism has fantastic iconography, it too fell short. For me, it was the fusion of Catholicism, Day of the Dead, Halloween, and Samhain that 'pulled it all together'. To find comfort and strength in bright bold colors, sugar skulls, candlelight vigils at cemeteries, skeletons portrayed as participants in everyday life, existing alongside the living (even if only conceptually), was a revelation. Day of the Dead is not meant to trivialize death by foiling the Grim Reaper; it is a moment each year to reflect upon one's life, celebrate it, and accept the natural cycle of death. More importantly, DOTD doesn't attempt to hide death, or make it scary and unnatural, concepts that were inculcated into my psyche via religion since childhood. In a way, participating in Day of the Dead celebrations, including creating DOTD-themed art, baking Pan de Muerto, and sprucing up my ofrenda, released me from the Puritanical notion of death being something to hide, especially from children. Personally, I combine Day of the Dead with Halloween and Samhain, commencing at 1200 AM on October 31st, then shifting into Day of the Dead-mode on November 1-2. These days I set aside to remember, honor, and celebrate my own loved ones who have passed by inviting their spirits to 'cross over' and connect with the living. Truly, it is a beautiful "Dead Man's Party"!



AZ: I see that you also make beautiful paper mache sugar skulls as well! Can you tell us a little bit about your process with that!

JB: I started making paper maché sugar skull masks entirely by hand (pre-Michaels blanks) in 2007, and selling them online. My masks were fairly primitive at that time and by no means standardized in size and shape! Looking back, their primitivism was part of the charm; more akin to those created in Mexico. I've sold over 600 masks to date, but have backed off making new ones now that the market is fully saturated. As for my 3D skulls, I typically make these from Styrofoam structures covered with papier maché, which I then sand, apply several coats of poly-acrylic gloss, and detail with oil-based paint markers. I developed a 'signature style' for decorating my sugar skull masks and 3D sugar skulls called 'Lines and Micro-Dots'. So far, this technique has remained pretty much my own. At this time I only make artisan-quality masks and 3D sugar skulls by commission. I will say the fun part of selling so many sugar skull masks over the years is the variety of customers and what they've used their masks for. Customers have worn them at "Hollywood Forever" Party in the Cemetery, punk & rock bands, a mariachi band, a Frida Kahlo burlesque show in San Francisco, participants in the Red & Black Parade in New Orleans, traditional DOTD dance performances, a bride & groom set to a customer in London, a prop company in California, and one to an Academy Award nominated film producer/director living in New York City. Of course, many people buy the masks and 3D skulls for display only. I believe I have one repeat customer who must have close to 20 masks. She's a darling.

Joni's favorite materials to work with when creating her signature skulls are Paper Mache and Swarovski Crystal Elements...



AZ: The personal shrines you make are gorgeous! Are they made just as decorative pieces or is each one a memorial piece, commissioned by clients of yours who have lost their loved ones? (May we display one of these with your feature?)

JB: Thank you! Some of my shrines are purely decorative and could be enjoyed by anyone simply as art; others are very personal, with only me knowing the meaning behind the design and ephemera within. I believe it would be hard to create a commissioned Personal Shrine without really knowing the customer. Having no knowledge of the memories and emotions of the person would make it difficult to create a meaningful piece. I believe the artist needs to be invested in the project to make it truly "personal". For instance, "Family Ties" features beautiful crystallized hangtags with photos of my distant ancestors. These are mounted in external open side compartments where they are open to turn in the air. A center compartment lies behind a door, and contains photos and memorabilia representing my immediate family. Another shrine, "Ella", is a Memento Mori shrine focusing on my Mother's life; her accomplishments, sorrows, joy, pain, and her importance to me. Each item included in "Ella" is either representative of a facet of her life or actual ephemera used by her. She passed in February of this year.

AZ: Do you have any specific Day of the Dead rituals that you follow around the fall time, when the veil is at its thinnest between the spirit and physical world?

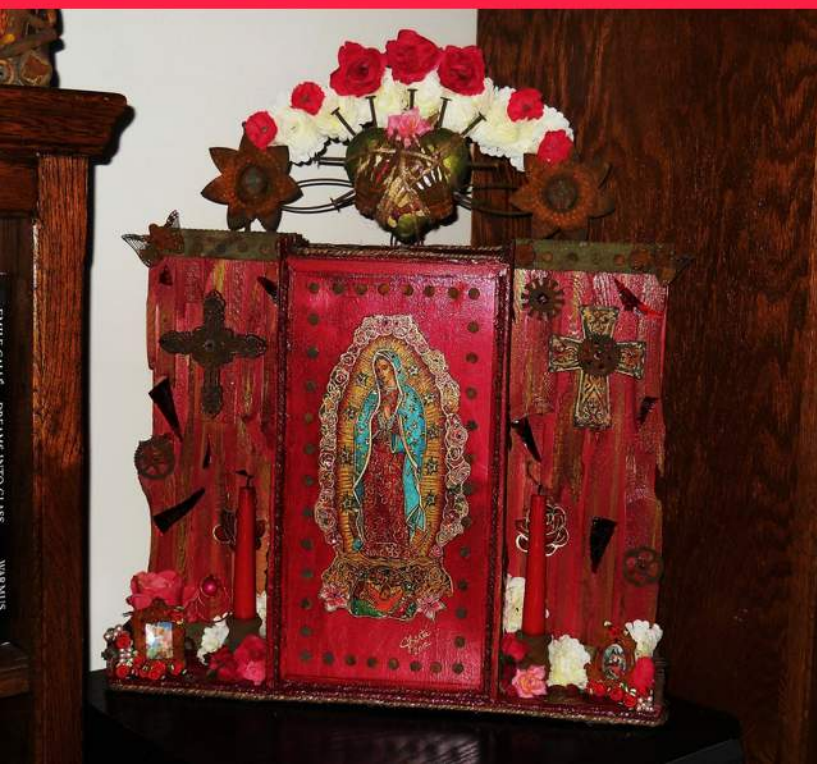
JB: It's hard to explain, but I'll try. As a child, as far back as I can remember, I always felt I could breathe more freely as Halloween approached. Now I recognize this feeling: it's as if the air is charged with energy, and I use this energy to create. I feel a mounting anticipation as the holiday approaches, a feeling of mystery and possibility. To me, Day of the Dead is part of the demimonde; its inclusion in my belief system and celebrations feels natural, and in some way inevitable. While I display my ofrenda all year, I prepare for DOTD by replacing the silk flowers with real ones, setting up specially framed photographs of loved ones who have crossed, along with representations of their favorite food and drinks (the tequila is for me). I refresh the candles and keep them lit from Halloween until the morning of November 3rd.

Throughout the days immediately prior to the holiday, I spend quite a bit of time in reflection. I try to prepare the ofrenda in a certain order, a ritual that enables me to focus entirely on what I am doing, and the meaning behind it. Typically, this works best when I'm alone with no distractions. I burn copal incense while preparing my ofrenda, and often throw in some sage for good measure and a nod to Samhain. When my ofrenda is complete I treat myself to a shot of Patron. Another favorite tradition is baking Pan de Muerto, this is a fun (and tasty!) project. And of course, during setup I play Oingo Boingo's "Dead Man's Party", particularly the song "No One Lives Forever". Good times.

AZ: Can you tell us a little bit about how you get your inspiration for such beautiful creative work?

JB: I was instantly inspired after a trip to Mexico in 2001, where I purchased some original DOTD artwork by one of Mexico's Master Artists, Alfonso Castillo. The first thing I did upon returning home was to buy a huge unfinished wooden bed frame. In two days of frenzied painting I transformed it into a work of art. It is bright red decorated with traditional Mexican and DOTD style designs, hand-scripted excerpts from the poems of Pablo Neruda (plus a line or two from "It's Been Awhile", by Staind), and generous handfuls of glitter thrown at the paint while it was still wet. In the candlelight, it's magical. My red bed has become a touchstone, a piece of functional art that never changes. I've attempted many styles and genre of art, but Day of the Dead art just feels right. Better yet, it seems the older I get, the faster the ideas come. Bold bright primary colors are a starting point for almost everything I create. Skulls, skeletons, runes, symbols, and lots of glitter are almost always present in my work, even if hidden.

Emotions are also key elements in creativity. My younger brother's death came unexpectedly in 2009, as I was completing my Post-Grad Degree in Celtic Studies at the University of Wales. Within days of his death I worked like a mad-woman and poured all my grief and memories into several large paintings. "Dark Angel", "Mosaic Angel", and "His Faceted Beauty", flowed from this pain. When my brother passed, my Mother asked for a painting I'd made years before, "Shattered Heart". It's a mixed media painting, the centerpiece being a 3D heart embossed with an image of the Virgin Mary. The heart is viciously stabbed through in several places with shards of broken mirror.







*While Visions of Sugar Skulls Danced in her Head...*

Off of these shards, onto the red rose-bordered canvas and down the frame itself, run rivulets of .blood'. When you look at the painting, you see yourself reflected in the bits of broken mirror. This reflects the sorrow of the Virgin, a broken-hearted mother who has lost her son, as well as the sorrow in the viewer's own heart. I was surprised that my Mother connected with such a bloody piece, but she did. She told me it was how she felt, but couldn't explain to anyone. So, long answer to a short question: seeing a connection forged between something I've created and another soul is my source of inspiration.

AZ: Who are some of your biggest inspirations and artistic influences who have shaped the style of your art? You obviously have a deep connection to Frida, so maybe elaborate on why you admire her so much, or tell us of any others you look up to in the art world?

Yes, Frida Kahlo is the artist I most admire. Her work, which I discovered alongside DOTD art, was...is so raw. She was fearless, and I believe this fearlessness made it okay for women to paint our feelings, even the most shocking. For example, Frida's 1932, "My Birth", or her 1935, "A Few Small Nips", still hold the power to shock. I'm not trying to be sexist, Frida has many male fans, but her work contains a lot of blood, and as women we live with blood throughout our lives; it is inescapable, it brings life and death, it is personal, and it is something all women can relate to. In essence, blood represents the feminine, and I believe Frida felt this and bled through her work: blood on canvas. I firmly believe that her art gives me the courage to paint what I feel, socially acceptable, or not. Similar to the Day of the Dead's surge in popularity, in the last five years alone I've noticed, specifically in social media and art, comparisons of Frida Kahlo to the Virgin Mary. In fact, many now refer to her as .St. Frida'. If a Cult of St. Frida exists, I guess I'm a charter member! At any rate, Frida was half German, as am I, so we have that in common. I've seen some pushback against non-Hispanic artists .coopting' Day of the Dead and Frida Kahlo-style art, and being labeled "culture vultures", but Frida belongs to everyone: Spiritus Mundi, El Mundo, The World.

(My own homage to Frida Kahlo lies in the life-size papier maché skeleton I made while living in Colorado Springs (titled, "Don't Forget Me"). There is a slideshow on my website showing the entire process, ending in her exhibition at Crossings, a Day of the Dead art exhibition, Denver, Colorado.)



*"Virgin of Guadalupe"  
in color pencil*



To arrange a commissioned piece, contact Joni via IG or email her through her website for prices & availability.

[WWW.COOPERCATGALLERY.COM](http://WWW.COOPERCATGALLERY.COM)

SEP

CALIFORNIA

CA 93  
W6072703

LBOINGO



JONI LOVES OINGO BOINGO SO MUCH, SHE GOT THIS LICENSE PLATE TO HONOR THEIR MUSIC, WHICH SHE LOVES TO LISTEN TO IN CELEBRATION OF THE DAY OF THE DEAD! HEAD OVER TO OUR ISSUE PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO HER FAVORITE OINGO BOINGO TRACKS!

# JONI'S PAN DE MUERTO

(BREAD OF THE DEAD RECIPE)

Joni would like to share her very special "Day of the Dead" recipe with us. She celebrates the tradition by leaving this bread on her Ofrenda for her loved ones who have passed on to the spirit world. She does a shot of tequila in their honor as she dances to *Oingo Boingo's* "Dead Man's Party"! Please feel free to try this yourself this *Day of the Dead* season!

## INGREDIENTS

MAKES 1 (15 IN) ROUND LOAF OR 2 (8 IN) ROUND LOAVES!

1/2 CUP BUTTER

1/2 CUP MILK

1/3 CUP WATER

5 CUPS FLOUR

2 PACKETS DRY YEAST

1/2 TEASPOON SALT

1 TABLESPOON ANISEED

1/2 CUP PLUS 1 TBSPN SUGAR

4 EGGS



## DIRECTIONS

1. In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, heat butter, milk, and water until butter is melted and mixture is very warm, but not boiling. In a large mixing bowl, combine 1 cup of the flour, yeast, salt, aniseed, and sugar. Beat in the warm milk mixture until well combined. Add eggs, and beat in another cup of flour. Continue adding flour until dough is soft but not sticky. Knead on a lightly floured surface 10 minutes until smooth and elastic.

2. Lightly oil a bowl, place the dough in it, and cover it with plastic wrap. Let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk, about 2 hours. Punch down dough, and shape into 1 or 2 loaves resembling skulls. Let rise for 1 hour!

3. Preheat oven to 370 degrees F. Bake loaves on a pizza stone or baking sheet until loaves sound hollow when you tap the bottoms. Remove from oven and paint on glaze while bread is warm. Cool to room temperature before serving!

GLAZE: Place 1/2 cup sugar, 1/3 cup fresh orange juice and grated zest of 1 orange in a small saucepan. Boil 2 minutes. Paint on bread with a pastry brush.

# Simply Gabrielle

Mistress of the Dark Moon

## Prepares Us For The Thinning of the Veil

You may have seen Highland Park, California native Gabby Cluck, better known on her Youtube Channel as "Simply Gabrielle" aka Mistress of the Dark Moon. She is an authentic witch, whom through her many videos, demonstrates what living a magickal lifestyle is all about. Today she talks with Abra-zine! about her Mexican culture and gives us some tips on how we can better prepare for this time of year when the worlds between life and death get thinner and it becomes easier for spirits to give us messages from the other side.



By Gabrielle Cluck

The "Thinning of the Veil" is when the days get shorter and the dead are free to walk with us. It's getting colder and there is that autumn crisp in the air. The energy is changing and I begin to come out of my dark times, because for me those tend to happen throughout the summer. The fall is a time when I really come alive and work a lot of magick.

I can tell you what I do to prepare for this time and I would hope that you go with what you feel is right, but for me, I cleanse my home with a good mix of ground up Palo Santo and tobacco, which is then burned over a coal disk. This makes an amazing cleanse for the whole house. Opening the windows will ensure that your property will be cleansed as well! Doing this type of cleanse will also help the spirits ease through. It's been said that if you put a plate of salt out the night before with a candle, you may see a hand print of a passed on loved one! I don't use sage at this time because it will hinder the spirit activity! I also get my mind ready through cleansing baths and meditation.

I am of Mexican decent so The Day of the Dead is very significant for me and my family. We really prepare our home and various foods as an offering to our ancestors, so they feel welcome as they come through. I personally have an ancestor altar also known in the Mexican culture as an Ofrenda, that I place candles on and leave food that I know they like such as tamales, sweet bread, coffee, Mexican candy, and any other food that I know my passed loved ones would enjoy. I love cooking around this time because it's a form of meditation for me! Getting ready for the season and setting the energy in my home and in my mind helps me from what could be overwhelming to some.

I love cooking around this time because it's a form of meditation for me! Getting ready for the season and setting the energy in my home and in my mind helps me from what could be overwhelming to some. All of my ancestors will come around and feast with us from around Thanksgiving in November up until January, and I can feel them singing and dancing all around. It's a truly memorable time full of love and laughs.

I feel that when we die, we are taken to a nicer place filled with our loved ones who have gone before us. If there is an after life, it would be a place similar to where I live now and I will be surrounded by all my loved ones, especially my mother and grandmother. If I were able to be reincarnated, I would want to be a spiritual healer. If someone left me an offering during the Day of the Dead, I would want a good book, candles, and good food... but most of all, I would want my children just sitting and talking to me.

### GABBY'S DAY OF THE DEAD OIL :

- \* 3 pinches of the darkest red roses
- \* 1 palm of Calendula
- \* Sunflower oil
- \* Patchouli ( For Sweet Musk Earthy Scent)
- \* A Few Drops of Vitamin E Oil  
(A natural preservative to keep from spoiling)

*Then I ask the ancestors to bless the oil and anoint my candles for dressing.*

# Q & A WITH GABRIELLE

AZ: At what age did you realize that there was something a little extra special about you, and that you were a natural born witch?

GC: I was 12 when I realized I was a witch.

AZ: At what age did you "Come Out of the Broom Closet?"

GC: I have never really been in the closet, I have been on other paths for a very short time but I eventually came back to my truth. I am and always will be a witch!

AZ: What kind of trials and tribulations did you have to overcome... those who embrace their witchy-ness are often frowned upon as evils doers, etc. How do you deal with the fearful haters and dispel those nasty rumors?

GC: I learned to be true to myself and by doing so, they can't hurt me. I raise my daughter with her truths as well.

AZ: What is your favorite magickal herb and why?

GC: My favorite magickal herb is Lavender because of its healing and calming abilities.

AZ: What is your favorite magickal tool and why?

GC: My favorite magical tool are my candles, because I can add any type of energy for any type of magick, and the element of fire is always so calming for me.

AZ: Do you have any advice for young witches looking to explore and find their path?

GC: I would tell any newcomers to the path of magick, "Do what feels best to you and always be true to yourself!"

You  
Tube

CLICK TO WATCH GABBY'S FULL VIDEO OF  
HER DAY OF THE DEAD THOUGHTS &  
PREPARATIONS!

Gabby's *Ofrenda* includes photos of her loved ones, fall leaves, candles, sage, and her homemade doll, Mama Evangeline who protects her and her loved ones, live or passed on!!



Gabby's Grandmother



Gabby's Mother

OCT

# TRIBUTE TO SLASHER FLICK MAVEN, **WES CRAVEN**

By  
**Darius  
Conway**



**AUGUST 2, 1939 - AUGUST 30 2015**

**W**es Craven was a filmmaker who was before his time. He was a man of pure imagination—an imagination that followed his audiences into their bedrooms as they lay their head to rest at night. Craven was born an innovator of horror both presently and for generations to come. Wesley Earl Craven was born in Cleveland, Ohio, to Caroline (Miller) and Paul Eugene Craven on August 2nd, 1939. He had a mid-western suburban upbringing with dreams of making it into the big world. He had hoped to make the world dream many nightmares with his films that would eventually immortalize him even after the day he would die.

Wes Craven's first feature film *The Last House on the Left* in 1972 pushed him to focus his career on terrifying the minds of the mainstream. He thrived on taking them into their own imagination, where mass killings and tales of torture would mentally terrorize them. Wes Craven changed the focus of the horror film industry from special lighting and affects to blood and new digital editing. He was the true definition of scare tactics. He knew how to scare his viewers to the edge of their seats and send them home with nightmares! He brought the nightmares to life, on screen. He crept into our own subconscious and tapped into our greatest fears.

What happens after watching a blood curdling, knife stabbing, bloody murder screaming and slashing Wes Craven film? These gruesome deaths were the thrills that brought Craven's films to LIFE! They sometimes exuded truth or realism. Take *SCREAM* for example, his famous 1995 film of high school kids threatened by a killer in a black fabric costume with a white mask who changes their voice as they kill a group of their best friends one by one. The basis for this film forces us to be weary of our own reality: It takes place in a small town, which could be anyone's place called "Home". The fact that Craven could paralyze his viewers temporarily or permanently with his imagination and place consistent focus on detail made him the legend he became and will remain, in the horror film industry.

He is a legend that many of us will remember as we go through the seasons of life. Life may continuously bring us back to a Wes Craven film beyond his death on those dark nights or most notably during Halloween season. Wes Craven was not a torturer, murderer, or abuser, all of which his characters were. He was a man of imagination, pure talent, drive, and courage. He will forever be remembered for his contributions to an industry that has exploded since his rise to fame in the early 70s. He will remain an inspiration to artists, visionaries and dreamers forever. Wes Craven died on August 30th, 2015 from a battle with brain cancer. With his death and immortality through screen, he leaves many more nightmares to come for all that view his slasher cult classics.

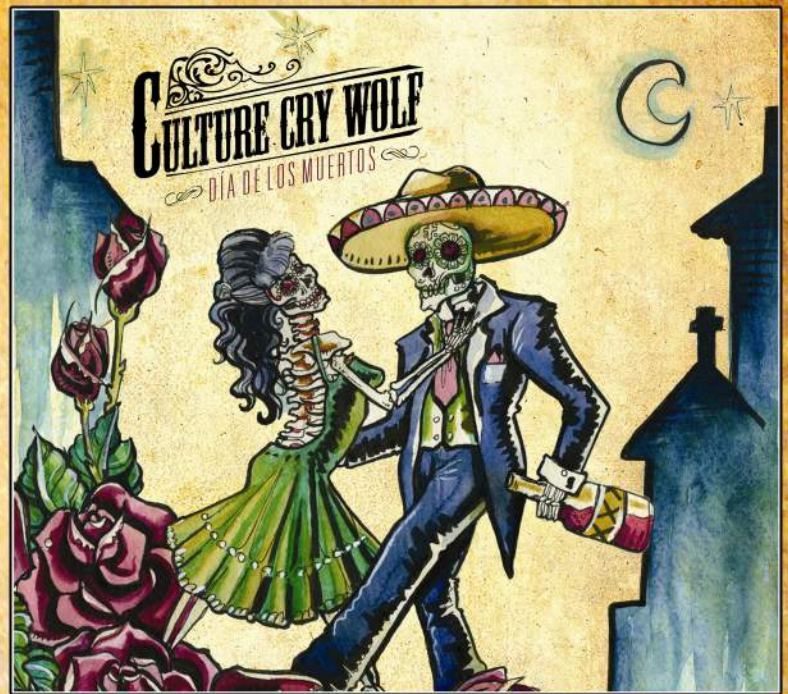
**REST IN PEACE WESLEY EARL CRAVEN**



Art By  
Roy Carubia  
(NJ, USA)

# ROCK BAND RESURRECTION: CULTURE CRY WOLF

BY JUSTINA CARUBIA



When I started doing my research for this issue, I really wanted to find some music that enveloped the theme of The Day of the Dead in a way that I have never seen done before. I usually take to Spotify to create my issue playlists for all of my readers to enjoy as they sift through the latest issue.

I came across the Minneapolis, Minnesota native band Culture Cry Wolf, which I immediately become obsessed with upon listening to “Day of the Dead”, one of the first songs presented in their music marketing platform. Upon first listen, the blaring of the latin horn in the intro was enough to catch my ear. It was the exact sound I had been searching for. I gained confirmation when the beat kicked in as my head bopped along to the obviously Mexican-influenced instrumental hook. Once the vocals came in, I was absolutely sold and wondered why I had never heard of this band before. They were way too good to not be mainstream, although a little part of me admittedly felt like I had discovered one of those “best kept secrets” and didn’t want to share them with anyone else.

The music is a summery blend of all of your favorite 90s bands with a modern and Mexican twist (Mod-Mex, did I just create a new music genre?) If you took the ska reggae punk bands like Sublime, or 311, mix in rap and rock vocals alla Linkin Park, and added a tinge of Mark McGrath’s raspy crooning, that is the best way I could describe their unique sound. Each song has a very nice balance of rap verses and rock chorus hooks, all to the backdrop of latin pop n’ sometimes doo-wop grooves (“Sweet Marie”) and blaring horn sections. Each song has their own notable flavor and their latest album “Día De Los Muertos” (2011) is a nice collection of songs that embraces the Day of the Dead theme very well without being kitschy in the slightest bit. Their single from this album, titled “Day of the Dead” serves as an anthem to let loose and live life to the fullest. The lyrics “We’re living in the Day of the Dead” encourages us to party it up and have a good time now, because we only live once! The song takes #YOLO to a whole new level and comes from the perspective of someone who is done living in regrets regardless of other people trying to control them. The music video, which balances scenes between a house party and vignettes of an uninhibited belly dancer, are equally as fun!

I loved the overall messages they conveyed throughout their uppity music! I had cyber-stalked the band to find a contact address where I could email them, and oddly every page they had online was outdated with information. Their accounts weren’t touched in at least a couple years, and I began to grow worrisome. Still I pressed on for some sort of answer as to where I could talk to someone in reference to this amazing music. I finally decided to take a chance and message them through their Facebook Page. Just as quickly as I became excited about finding this new “under the radar” band, I was saddened when someone from the band responded, “We are sadly no longer together.” WHAT!?! Was that it!?! Just like that, the hopes of enjoying any future music or content made and released by my new favorite band, shattered. I even considered deeming it pointless to even cover a story on a band that has...well...”disbanded”. Then I stopped and I thought to myself, “Wait a minute...just because this band is no longer together, doesn’t mean the music they have already released, no longer exists. That doesn’t make that music any less amazing, or any less worthy to spread around and share to others who might equally enjoy just as much as I.” I wrote back to the band and insisted that I still feature their album if that was ok with them, because it is STILL great and it STILL has a story to tell. They responded back with, “Thank You! We are happy our music is still being felt and making people happy.”

So this article for me personally, has turned into more of a lesson. Bands separate but the product of the band is the most important thing. It’s the music and the MESSAGES within it that continue to live on FOREVER. We are immortalized by the work we create and put out into the world, and I feel very privileged to have been able to dig down into the musical underworld and resurrect the music of Culture Cry Wolf from their Rock Band Graveyard for all the world to hear, time and time again!



**LISTEN TO CULTURE CRY WOLF'S ALBUM DIA DE LOS MUERTOS ON SPOTIFY!**



© Linda Lindberg

27-08-2015



# “THE BEAUTY OF FALL”

FEATURING ARTWORK ON PREVIOUS PAGE  
BY LINDA “LINNZY” LINDBERG (SWEDEN)



THIS ART PIECE WAS INSPIRED BY THE “3 MARKER CHALLENGE”. THE MAIDEN FAE IS COLORED BY ONLY 3 MARKERS (GREYS, BLACK AND GOLD PENS ARE USED AS ENHANCEMENTS). SHE IS THEN CUT OUT AND GLUED ONTO THE BACKGROUND PAPER, WHICH IS ENHANCED BY A GOLD PEN. THE ACORNS AND LEAVES ARE COLORED WITH WATERCOLORS AND CUT OUT AND GLUED INTO PLACE. THIS WAS A FUN PIECE OF ART WITH MIXED MEDIA AND CHALLENGES!



# “AUTUMN MUSINGS”

SENTIMENTS BY JANACE MARIE  
(NORTH CAROLINA, USA)

*I WROTE THIS DURING AN ODD TIME OF MY LIFE, IN TRANSITIONING TO WHO I AM NOW, AND WHEN I FIRST MADE THE CONNECTION ON MY OWN THAT LIFE AND THE UNIVERSE ARE GOVERNED BY LAWS THAT SYNC UP TO THE SEASONS. A LIGHT BULB WENT OFF. IT'S MORE OF A POETIC JOURNAL ENTRY THAT I WASN'T SURE WHY I FELT COMPELLED TO WRITE:*

“FALL IS NOT THE ACT OF THINGS DYING, BUT SIMPLY BEING LAID TO REST. THERE ISN'T ANOTHER TIME DURING THE YEAR THAT MAKES ME FEEL MORE ALIVE, THAN WHEN IT'S ALL ROTTING AND WILTING. BECAUSE ONCE IT'S DEAD AND GONE, THE ONLY CHOICE IS TO START AGAIN NEW, THE SAME WAY OLD PATTERNS ARE FORCEFULLY BROKEN, THE FINAL PIECES OF THE HARD SHELL CHIP AND BREAK AWAY. YOU HAVE TO BE YOUNG TO PLAY THE FOOL THAT FALLS IN LOVE, HOPING FOR THINGS THE WAY WE DID WHEN TIME WAS DECEIVINGLY INFINITE. LIKE AT BIRTH WHEN THE DAYS ARE SO MUCH LONGER, AND THE NIGHTS ARE EASILY MADE INTO MAGIC. THE OCEAN IS BIGGER, AND THE GRASS IS GREENER. THOUGH THE YEAR HAS BEEN MORE ACCOMPLISHED THAN THE LAST, I'M STILL TIRED IN A NEW KIND OF WAY. REST WITH ME THIS SEASON. WHEN WE AWAKE, IT'LL BE LIKE THE VERY FIRST TIME...”

[WWW.ALLTHEWORLDADREAM.TUMBLR.COM](http://WWW.ALLTHEWORLDADREAM.TUMBLR.COM)

# FESTIVE SKELETONS

BY JESSICA RAMSEY  
(19, MARYLAND, USA)

WATCH THEM SPIN,  
WATCH THEM TURN,  
SMILES IMMOVABLE,  
INTERMINABLE,  
FOREVER LAUGHING IN THE NIGHT.

CANDLES BURN,  
LANTERNS FLICKER,  
MUSIC SLIDES,  
THE DEAD STRIDE OUT TO PLAY,

SHOW THEM HONOR,  
SHOW THEM RESPECT,  
DANCE WITH THEM,  
AND REMEMBER.

REMEMBER THEM,  
AS THEY WERE,  
AS THEY ARE,  
AS THEY WILL BE.

HOLD ONTO THE MEMORIES,  
NEXT YEAR GREET THEM,  
MAKE THEM ANEW,  
DON'T FORGET.

THE DEAD ARE TO BE REMEMBER,  
DON'T FORGET,  
THEY WERE ONCE LIKE US,  
AND WE WILL SOON BE LIKE THEM.

DON'T FORGET.



"Brides"  
By Allie  
Hartley  
(NY, USA)





Art:  
"Bubblebum  
Sugar Skull"  
by Justina  
Carubia  
[BUY](#)  
[PRINT](#)

## Dia De Los Muertos

Sometimes we all fall apart  
Sometimes we all just can't start  
Sometimes we can begin again  
On Dia De Los Muertos

All will live  
And all will die  
All will feel their spirits fly  
On Dia De Los Muertos

Remember the dead  
Remember their laughs  
Remember that they love us still  
On Dia De Los Muertos



Poem by  
**Angela Halley Velasquez**  
29, Lutherville, MD, USA

# THE LITTLE GHOST GIRL NAMED ESTHER



BY DENA K. MILLER

There is a story to be told about an old Victorian Mansion, a piano, and a little girl who once resided there. This spooky tale begins back in the late 1800s when Esther, the sweet little girl, lived and played in this Victorian mansion. Her world revolved around the piano, as she loved to create beautiful music. Most of her day was centered on tickling its pale ivory keys. In fact, she would rather play her piano than play with her dolls or even go outdoors. At the age of 10, her piano playing was brilliant!!! Her family was immensely intrigued! Esther could write and play musical pieces as well as perform them with an ease that was astounding! Her dream was to play piano forever and ever no matter what direction her life took her. As the years went by Esther never seemed to age...her family found it quite absurd. Not even the medical professionals could figure out the strangeness of this oddity. Many years went by and the family passed on, but the little girl remained in the house with her piano.

"This is an actual photograph of my Aunt. Her name was Esther and she was my inspiration for this story, which I wrote a few years ago."

It has been said that no one really knows what happened to the little girl but her spirit still remains within the walls of this house and in her piano. A new family now lives in the Old Mansion. The piano still has a place in a new found music room. Every October, the piano is simply decorated with a touch of seasonal charm. If you listen closely, you can hear the little ghost girl playing her enchanting music. If you look very closely, you can see the sweet little faery that has become her protector, sitting quietly on the keys.





# LA LLORONA A MEXICAN FOLK TALE

RETOLD BY  
JUSTINA CARUBIA  
WITH ARTWORK  
BY VIKKI YEATES

I first heard about the classic tale of “La Llorona” upon watching Julie Taymor’s cinematic tribute to the life and work of Frida Kahlo, starring Salma Hayek. The movie spotlights the classic Mexican Folk tale in song form during a dark scene toward the end of the movie where Frida is drowning her sorrows at a bar, in a bottle and a pack of smokes. The scene is an emotive montage featuring the hauntingly beautiful vocals of Chavela Vargas, who has since passed in August of 2012. Watching this scene in retrospect enhances the rendition’s sentimental value, all the more.

The story of La Llorona had popped up again for me this passed summer, in a seemingly popular compilation of women’s folk tales and fables, titled, “Women Who Run With the Wolves” by Dr. Clarissa Pinkola Estes. I had remembered it from the Frida movie, and the actual story (which had been sung in Spanish in the movie) had now intrigued me as it became translated to me by Miss Estes. I knew I just had to share it here, as it is a very powerful and sad story.

As hispanic legend has it, “La Llorona” is translated as The Weeping Woman. Several variations of this tale exist, but the most basic rendition tells us of a beautiful woman named Maria. Her husband leaves her for a younger women, so as a means of revenge, she drowns her children in the Mexican River. Once she realizes that she had killed her children, she could not bear to live with herself, so she took her own life by drowning herself as well.

When she gets to the gates of heaven, she is told that she is not allowed to enter into the afterlife, until she has found her children. She is then forced to wander the Earth for all eternity, trapped between the living and the spirit world, searching for her drowned children. Her constant weeping has given her the name “La Llorona”.

It is said that parents use the tale to prevent their children from wandering out at night, for La Llorona would kidnap any children who resembles her own, drowning them in the river to replace the ones she is looking for. People who have seen The Weeping Woman claim that she appears mostly at night around rivers or lakes. Some even believe that those who hear her cries in the night, are marked for death.

[CLICK HERE TO WATCH THE LATE CHAVELA VARGAS PERFORM “LA LLORONA” IN THIS CLIP FROM JULIE TAYMOR’S 2002 FILM, FRIDA.](#)

[CLICK HERE TO BUY “WOMEN WHO RUN WITH THE WOLVES” ON AMAZON!](#)





# DARIONCE AND THE WITCH'S TOWER



STORY AND ILLUSTRATION  
BY DARIUS CONWAY  
(NYC, USA)



Once there was a princess named Darionce who lived in a tower on the coast of a deserted island. Darionce was taken into slavery work at a young age by an evil witch who had come and captured her in the middle of the night. The witch had threatened to kill Darionce and her family as she watched if she tried to escape. See, the witch could transport through space and time and be anywhere she pleased, in an instant. Darionce wanted to escape very badly, but she loved her family too much to even attempt. The tower that she lived in was three stories high, at the top of a peak on the oceans shore. The sounds of seagulls and winds blowing calmed Darionce; she knew that she was not meant to die here. Darionce was hopeful that one day she would leave this place, as she had begun to feel extremely lost and alone. It would be 9 months of planning before Darionce would escape with the help of her friends, The Stoop People and Prince Matthew. Darionce could see The Stoop People below his window of the tower each day and could hear them talking on the stoop. They were more like trolls than people. They had greasy hair that looked like it had not been washed in years and they smelled of grease and dead animals. One was short and fat while the other was tall and thin, but the last one was really tall and fat...super fat. Despite their awkward demeanor, they were all the most wonderful people to Princess Darioncé. She would open the window through the bars and speak with them each day. She begged for them to help her. They knew they could not, because even they were slaves to the witch. The witch had taken them as babies, so it is all they knew. They have been brainwashed to follow the her evil commands.

One day Darionce decided that if she were to escape, she would have to promise to free The Stoop People as well—All for one and one for all! She would need to convince them to come with her on the escape from the witch's tower. She had a plan and was ready to share it with the straggly bunch. What would Darionce's plan be and will it work!? She was determined to be free and help her friends be free with her. If she did not have a family to go back to, she knew she had three new friends who would become more like family to her than anyone else. She was ready to take the chance. The next day, Princess Darionce woke up, cooked breakfast and went back to her attic in the tower. She waited for the stoop crew to come and signal her to escape. They waited until the witch left at dawn to go capture more animals for food. Yes, the witch lived an organic lifestyle. Darionce waited for her to leave to signal The Stoop People from her window so they could come up and let her out with the key that they had stolen from the witch's bedroom. The rule was, if The Stoop People got the key, Darionce would do most of the work so that neither person suffered death and they would escape successfully. The day had come to leave the suppression of the witch's entrapment.

The three Stoop People had finally freed Darionce from her room. They rushed through the tower and out of the back entrance so they would not be seen by anyone that was not part of the plan who would rat them out. They rush from the back entrance and into the woods, heading towards the sea. The Stoop people were trusting in Darionce because she was the only person they knew who had not done them wrong. They were in good hands. Darionce led them to the sea where The Stoop People had spent their free time building a raft that would take them to civilization across the water. They climbed aboard and pushed it off away from the shore. Hope was not far away! They were closer than ever to being free from the witch—The witch that had taken them away from a better life they could have known— A life of freedom. As the witch was out hunting, she felt a sense that something was out of the ordinary. She left her hunting quarters in the woods and headed to the tower. Once she arrived, she noticed that her boys were no where to be found. Where were her Stoop People, her slaves? "Darionce, Darionce! Open up little girl!", called the witch. No answer from behind the door that did not open. The witch used her powers to blast the it down. The hopes of finding Darionce behind the door were slim, and much to her confirmation, she had escaped! The witch knew where her slaves were heading. She disappeared into thin air, through a portal in the atmosphere that would take her to them. She knew that the only safe route to life was from the ocean. She appeared many feet away from Darionce and The Stoop People. They could see her appear from afar and began to panic. Darionce had planned this her whole life. She knew what the witch's weakness was and what she could say to her to destroy her. She had this planned her whole life. Would it work? Would just saying a few words make the witch go away?

Darionce sees the witch flying towards them and yells, "I FORGIVE YOU!" The witch hears and yells, "N000000000!" And POOF! The witch was gone forever. Darionce could not believe that the whole time, the answer was just to forgive and move on. She had been taught that, but had lost it along with her hope throughout the years. Darionce and The Stoop People were free without even having to put up a fight. They were on their way to civilization. They were on their way to Freedom! As they floated away on the serene water, they questioned, "Where do we go from here?" Would they die before they landed?

# EMBRACING OUR PAST LIVES

BY JANACE MARIE  
(NC, USA)

[www.AlltheWorldADream.Tumblr.com](http://www.AlltheWorldADream.Tumblr.com)



MY BODY IS YOUNG BUT MY SPIRIT IS THAT OF SOMETHING ELSE. I FEEL LIKE I'VE DIED PREMATURELY AT LEAST A DOZEN TIMES BEFORE. MAYBE THAT'S WHY I CONNECT WITH DEATH SO MUCH. I'VE HAD TO GROW UP FAST. BUT MY DARKER SIDE ISN'T ANYTHING THAT WOULD WANT TO INTENTIONALLY HURT OTHER PEOPLE, JUST AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE UNDER-SIDE OF HUMAN NATURE IS CAPABLE OF DOING.

I LOVE DIA DE LOS MUERTOS FOR THAT REASON. IT'S THE ONE TIME OF THE YEAR WHEN YOU'RE ALLOWED TO EMBRACE THIS, AND BE AT UNREST WITH ANY CRUEL PERMANENCE YOU CAN'T CHANGE. CLOSURE IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR THE DEAD.

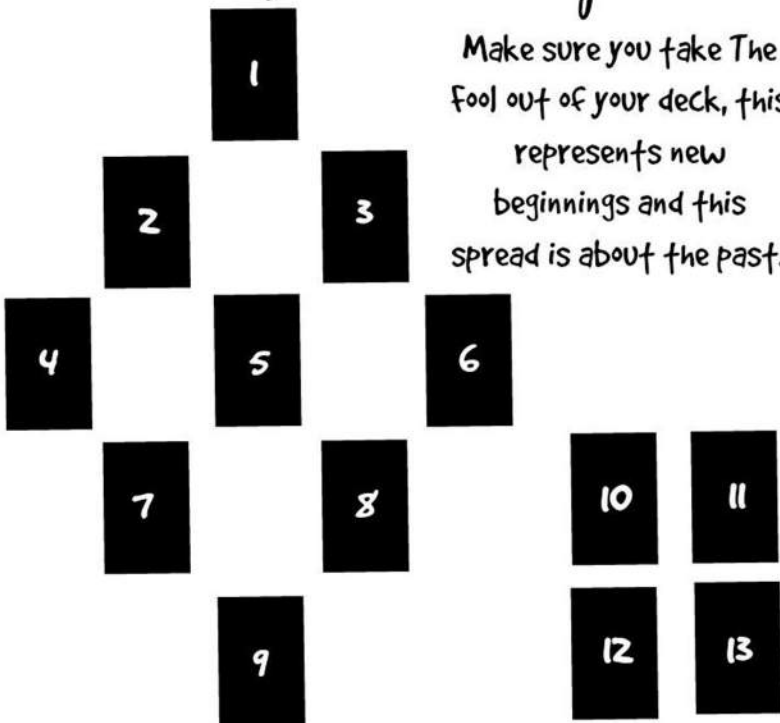
THE LIVING, THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND.

## USE OF DIVINATION

Using forms of divination such as the Tarot is an excellent way to connect with our past. Here is one spread you can try to see what kind of life you might have led in one of your past lives! It helps to have some working knowledge of the Tarot when trying this spread. Did you pull that dreaded Death card in your Tarot spread? Fear not! The Death card is not to be taken so literally! The death card is one of the most positive cards in the deck, and should be looked at with an understanding that you need to put the past behind you and embrace new opportunities! One door closes, another door opens!

### Past Life Tarot Spread

Make sure you take The Fool out of your deck, this represents new beginnings and this spread is about the past!



1. YOUR GENDER.
2. THE ENVIRONMENT YOU GREW UP IN.
3. YOUR CHILDHOOD.
4. YOUR EDUCATION AND HOW YOU FAIRED.
5. YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS.  
WHETHER YOU ACHIEVED YOUR GOALS OR NOT.
6. THE OCCUPATION YOU HELD FOR THE LONGEST.
7. YOUR RELATIONSHIPS.
8. YOUR FAMILY LIFE.
9. THE NATURE OF HOW YOU DIED.
10. A LESSON YOU LEARNT IN THIS PAST LIFE.
11. ANOTHER LESSON YOU LEARNT.
12. HOW THIS PAST LIFE COULD HELP YOU LIVE THE LIFE YOU ARE LIVING NOW.
13. ANOTHER WAY THIS PAST LIFE COULD HELP YOU LIVE THE LIFE YOU ARE LIVING NOW.



# Celebrating With the Spirits of Santa Fe By Dee Carubia

Whenever I tell people that I traveled to Santa Fe, New Mexico for my birthday, people ask, “Why would you want to go there?” The truth of the matter is, I don’t really know why, other than I felt extremely drawn to get to Santa Fe and had no idea at the time what a spiritual place it is.

I was born on my mom’s birthday – May 19th (does the year matter?) What a great gift I was for her 22nd birthday! Could she ask for anything better? Tee-hee! I have always loved those bragging rights; sadly on February 13, 2012 Mom went to be with Dad amongst the angels. That first birthday without being able to call her up and say, “HAPPY BIRTHDAY MOM!!!” was extremely hard for me. It was then that I looked at her picture on my living room mantel and told her “From now on I will travel to a special place each year to celebrate our birthday, light a candle on a cupcake and lift my glass to us – Cheers! (Mom was a party animal!)”

My search began through YouTube to become familiar with Santa Fe - the area, what there was to do and see. I came across a lot of travel videos by individuals, which was great, but the best video was Giada’s “Santa Fe Weekend Getaway”! I love Giada DeLaurentis and entrusted the advice she gave, after all, her first stop was to a chocolate shop called ‘Todos Santos’! And what girl doesn’t LOVE chocolate, right? What looked REALLY COOL was that the candy store décor is the ‘Day of the Dead’ themed!! So, so cool! And so my further planning of this trip ensued! We were off to Santa Fe, New Mexico for my birthday in May of 2013!

I chose to stay at the Hotel Chimayo, right down the street from the touristy Historic Plaza, but not in the midst of the action (although the hotels Low ‘n Slow Lowrider Bar had its own action). Since Giada never disclosed her hotel choice, that is where we decided to stay. The door to the hotel courtyard opened to a chiminea placed in the corner with religious candles on the mantel. The long courtyard was lined with red chilis hanging from each balcony, which led us to the door to our room. The beds (yes – ended up in a double room) were draped with Mexican blankets and a cross was hung on the center of the wall. So, if there was a cross, why did I feel like there was someone else with us? I didn’t let onto my husband how I was feeling at the moment; the next morning he took a picture of me in the courtyard. What I found really strange was what should have been a beautifully colored picture taken on our digital camera, appeared washed out, black and white. The picture looked as though it was from a different era.





“What I found really strange was what should have been a beautifully colored picture taken on our digital camera, appeared washed out, black and white. The picture looked as though it was from a different era.” It has been said that spirits like to communicate with us through means of electronic interference! COULD IT BE?

Onto breakfast at the hotel's *Tia Cocina*, where we chose a table in front of a burning fireplace - yes, even in May! We had a wonderful authentic Northern New Mexican breakfast: Huevos Rancheros De Chimayo (two eggs on top of corn tortilla, with green chili, beans, and papas fritas (fried potatoes). Yum!! Now, with our bellies full, we set out to the 400 year old *Santa Fe Plaza*! There you will see *The Palace of the Governors* building, built back in 1610! On certain days of the week the Native American Indian artists line the Plaza and sell their crafts; we found really cool guitar picks made of copper and bought a couple for gifts. You could definitely feel this was the heart of Santa Fe! There were musicians playing, artists painting, children running through the blocked off streets and food and drinks for sale.

Down the side streets there are many art galleries and stores selling their wares. We stopped in a store called *The Trading Post*, as we wanted to check out Cowboy hats, boots and I wanted a turquoise bracelet. This store had the whole right side of the wall lined with hats! Eureka! We tried some on, and then continued on through the store, which looped around to an entire jewelry section! It was counter upon counter of silver and turquoise jewelry! I immediately spotted a couple I liked and my kind husband insisted on buying me the one that fit me like a glove! We got to talking with the nice and hospitable lady dressed in a cowgirl top and skirt. She told us that Johnny Depp was recently in there! Yesiree! He had been taping *The Lone Ranger* and went shopping there! Wow! I sat in a chair that he sat in! Awesome! The lady's husband was whipping up a bowl of guacamole and even though I insisted I didn't like the stuff, he insisted I try it! OMG! Is this what I've been missing? It was so creamy, green and delicious! Wow! I want to move to this place! Everyone is so nice! The food is awesome! And I feel peace and tranquility in the atmosphere!

Next stop: lunch! Now I needed my own heaping platter of guacamole, so we headed over to *Coyote's Rooftop Cantina*. My birthday drink of choice to Mom and I was their signature Mango Margarita to go with our huge Nachos Totopos platter with lots of guac! Yum! For dessert, I decided to hold off on Mom's cupcake for now and set off to find Giada's recommended chocolate at *Todos Santos* ("All Saints")! The store was a lot smaller than it looked on the YouTube video and I remembered how Giada said the chocolate was made of 70% cocoa! Wow! So, since it was so rich (and by that I also mean expensive), my husband picked out a small snack of chocolate chili almonds and mine was a rich chocolate covered toffee square, which I made sure lasted me the whole day.



(Top Left to Right:) 1. Our room at Hotel Chimaya was very religious with the crosses! I felt a spiritual presence here! 2. I'm sipping on my Birthday Mango Margarita at Coyote Rooftop Cantina! (Middle L to R:) 3. Loretto Chapel- Another photo that appears to have gone back in time! (SPOOKY!) 4. Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi (Bottom L to R:) 5. The Wooden Statue is St. Francis of Assisi. Someone broke his hands off and he was waiting to be repaired. 6. Inside Loretto Chapel with the mysteriously built "Miraculous Stairway". Would this be considered the "Stairway to Heaven"?

My husband's delicious dinner at The Shed!



The end of our perfect day was in an authentic New Mexican restaurant right by the chocolate shop called The Shed. It was here that I got a chance to show off that I did my homework! The waitress asked if we would like red or green sauce on our enchiladas. I let my husband answer first and then I said I would have “Christmas”. He looked at me surprised! Well, when you want both red and green salsa together, that’s what you say in “The City Different”!

Our next day started with another wonderful breakfast and onto the beautiful Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, named after the Patron Saint of Santa Fe and built back in 1869. The cathedral replaced the first church that was built in 1610 when the town was founded, but that was destroyed by the Pueblo Indian Revolt in 1680. Onto our next church, located at the end of Old Santa Fe Trail called the Loretto Chapel. It is in here that we had a chance to witness the “Miraculous Staircase”, which has two 360-degree turns, and was made without nails or glue to hold it together. It was made only of 33 steps, risers and the wooden dowels, or pegs to hold it together. It was truly an amazing and miraculous sight!

Onward to our final destination for the day, a half-mile trek down historic Canyon Road visiting 100 galleries, studios and places to eat! The gallery owners were all so nice! It was at the Meyer East Gallery where I discovered the work of local artist Fatima Ronquillo. Check her out on FB. I now receive invites to her opening receptions in Santa Fe. One day, I will get back there to attend one of them! I never did get to see the inside the infamous Georgia O’Keefe Museum as it was on the other side of town and closing when we got there, but Santa Fe is calling me back! You can feel the spirits all around and I know my mother enjoyed her birthday right along side of me during my enchanting stay in Santa Fe!

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WATCH GIADA'S WEEKEND GETAWAY, THE INSPIRATION BEHIND DEE'S VISIT TO SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO!



Yummy snack at La Cantina! CHEERS MOM! HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US!



# ONCE IN A BLOOD MOON

## A Full Moon Celebration At the Lancaster, PA Wolf Sanctuary

By Justina Carubia


This past month I had the pleasure of visiting the Lancaster, Pennsylvania Wolf Sanctuary in celebration of my father's birthday. It was something he really wanted to do as he has always been drawn to the mystery behind the demeanor or such fascinating creatures. We had jumped at the chance to experience this with him, because not only was it a chance to see some of these magical beasts in the closest thing to their natural habitat (the animals are fenced off from visitors, but are given room to roam freely in their woodland surroundings), this was also a chance to experience the magic during the best time you possibly can, and that was during the September Harvest Full Moon. The full moon this past September was also a Blood Moon!

A Blood Moon is a total lunar eclipse in which the Earth eclipses a full, and the direct sunlight is blocked, but the sun's rays still light up the moon. However, this light has travelled through the Earth's atmosphere first, which causes the totally eclipsed Moon to sometimes look a red or brownish hue. The next Blood Moon is said to not come back around until January 2018! So this fact alone, made this even all the more special!

There were about 40 wolves in the sanctuary, total. Some cages had 3-4 wolves, then there was one cage in particular which housed a "lone" wolf. He was deaf and blind and could not be put in the cage with others as it posed a threat to the other wolves. Throughout the night, we would hear his soft howl against the glow of the moonlight. The coolest thing I learned was that all of the people and guides working the informational posts had their very own special relationship with each wolf, and were all there as volunteers, because they truly have a passion for working with these animals. That spoke volumes to me.

One of the coolest things that I thought the sanctuary had to offer was a huge bonfire in the main area of the camp. The fire had to have stood about 8-10 feet high which anyone was allowed to roast marshmallows or hotdogs in. There was also an authentic native american tribal drumming ceremony commencing throughout the whole night. There were descendants of tribes such as the Blackfoot and Cherokee, dressed in their full garb, drumming, chanting, and dancing circles around the fire. They engaged the audience to join in with them, stomping the ground with their ankle bells and spiritual intention. Everyone joined hands, circled the fire together and every now and then would howl at the moon!

This night truly made me feel like I was one with the pack. It brought me back to my own sense of instinct, encouraging me to release my own humanly inhibitions and revert back to the wild animal I once was. This truly was a magical night to remember AAAAWOOOOOHHHH!!!



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# OCTOBER ART CHALLENGE

BY RACHAEL CARINGELLA

## DARE TO BE CREATIVE! RACHAEL CARINGELLA CHALLENGES YOU!



You can create with any medium, any style! (Even if it's just a quick doodle.) The whole point is to fill your mind and soul with inspiration, while flooding our social media with artistic images of Fall/October! Feel free to share and invite anyone who wants to join! This is free for everyone. Just tag #treetalkerartchallenge or #octoberartchallenge on Facebook or Instagram so I can feature drawings periodically!

1. FALLING LEAVES
2. SCARECROW
3. YOUR FAVORITE FALL BEVERAGE
4. A CUTE MONSTER
5. DARKNESS
6. APPLES
7. BONFIRE
8. HARVEST
9. A SPOOKY TREE
10. A TROLL
11. A PRETTY FALL SCENE
12. THE SAME FALL SCENE, BUT AT NIGHT
13. COBWEBS
14. A HAUNTED HOUSE
15. A GHOST
16. SOMETHING YOU ARE AFRAID OF
17. A WITCH
18. A FALL TRADITION
19. A MASK
20. A SCARY MONSTER
21. JACK-O-LANTERN
22. HOWLING
23. MYTHICAL/FICTION CREATURE OR MONSTER
24. SOMETHING MAGICAL
25. WITCHES BROOM CLOSET
26. BAT
27. THE FULL MOON
28. SCARVES AND FALL COMFORT
29. CANDY BOWL
30. A FAVORITE HALLOWEEN MEMORY
31. GRAVEYARD

# BLAB MAGAZINE

WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO OUR  
FIRST EVER MAGAZINE ISSUE REVIEW!

FALL 2015 RELEASE  
"THE DAY OF THE DEAD"  
FEATURING OUR SPEAKERS



Justina Carubia  
Editor in Chief



Avinash Patel  
(Photographer,  
Contributor)



Nicole Lee  
Aguilar  
(Writer,  
Wellness Coach,  
Contributor)



Vincenzo  
Carubia  
(Filmmaker,  
Actor,  
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# SUBMIT TO THE WINTER 2016 ISSUE!

## WE WILL BE DISCOVERING THE THEME OF REFLECTIONS

*The winter time is naturally a time when all of life goes on hiatus. The leaves on the trees are no longer existent, lakes and bodies of water are frozen over, and the animals are burrowed deep within the earth to keep warm from the harsh temperatures. Even us humans tend to slow down a bit, maybe some of us get a bit lazier. But let's not discredit this time away from the busy lives we lead in the abundant lush Spring and Summer. The slow pace of winter time is necessary for our human growth and personal development. Sometimes we need to quiet the noise that life throws at us during those warmer months, and "freeze" over so to speak. We need to stop a moment, and reflect a bit so we can re-emerge in the Spring, as a new person, blessed with our own gift of personal insight. This is the time to delve a little deeper and explore a little bit more about ourselves.*

*In our upcoming issue we will focus on themes of personal "Reflection" and talk about some of the discoveries we have found about ourselves and even the world around us. Contributors are welcome to submit any form of material pertaining to this theme! We are looking for all kinds of submission pieces such as Art, poetry, lyrics, music, stories, vlogs, how-to instructional pieces, meditations, prayers, affirmations, inspirational quotes, photography, recipes, arts and crafts projects, art videos, tips and tricks for the season, travel stories, folklore, fairytales, spiritual experiences, etc. These are just some submission ideas to jog your imagination! We will also accept anything Winter or seasonally and holiday related! (Accepted holidays for this issue are Christmas, Chanukah, Kwanza, Valentine's Day, or St. Patrick's Day) If you have an idea for a piece that is not on this list, send it to us at [Info@Abrazine.com](mailto:Info@Abrazine.com)!*

**BEFORE SUBMITTING, PLEASE READ OUR  
[COMPLETE SUBMISSION GUIDELINES HERE!](#)**





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THANKS FOR READING!

“Lime Skull”  
Artwork by  
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Art by  
Amy Napper  
"Skull Mind Rot"

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