



NEW MEXICO MAGAZINE

ARTICLE: PRESENT COMPANY (...ACCEPTED)

HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE ISSUE: DECEMBER 2016

by [Blair Anderson](#), [Edie Dillman](#), and [Kate Nelson](#) photos by Inga Hendrickson

CHILD'S PLAY

Dear Santa: We've been very, very good this year and hope you'll do some New Mexico shopping before coming down our chimney, because these are the only, only things that we really, really want.

1. Painted cottonwood roadrunner, by Matt Yellowman (Navajo) Wright's Indian Art, Albuquerque; \$325. (505) 266-0120; wrightsgallery.com
2. Wooden sword, by Larry Lopez Twirl, Taos; \$21. (575) 751-1402; twirltaos.org
3. Felt matryoshka doll with baby, by Rebecca Porter Twirl; \$30. (575) 751-1402; twirltaos.org
4. Monster pillow toy, by Los Muertos Fine Art Works Detours at La Fonda, Santa Fe; \$26. (505) 988-1404; lafondasantafe.com
5. Soule flower barrette, by Siri Soule Twirl; \$15. (575) 751-1402; twirltaos.org
6. Siberian spruce boomerang, by Paul Milner The Farm Shop at Los Poblanos Historic Inn, Albuquerque; \$16. (505) 344-9297; farmshop.lospoblanos.com
7. Cocky, by Loyd Tireman; illustrated by Ralph Douglass, just one of the 1940s-era Mesaland books republished last December by UNM Press. The Farm Shop at Los Poblanos; \$16. (505) 344-9297; farmshop.lospoblanos.com
8. Origami wishing star bracelets, by Jessica Kimmey Twirl; \$5. (575) 751-1402; twirltaos.org
9. Wooden truck, by Lorenzo Gonzales Tapetes de Lana shop at the Mora Valley Spinning Mill, Mora; \$27. (575) 387-2247; moravalleysspiningmill.com



Santa Fe Animal Shelter
ADOPT AN OLDER PET

Snapshots: Indian Market
ARTS ON THE PLAZA

October 2013
Buddhist Monk Returns
MEET GESHE SHERAB

East Santa Fe Life

The key to your community



Art Imitating Death

Day of the Dead Celebration Is Artist's Inspiration

East Santa Fe Life Magazine - October 10th, 2013

Article: 'Lively Art Depicts Day of the Dead'

by: Ryan Richards *Editor*

lively Art Depicts Day of the Dead

Santa Fe artist embraces the Latin American holiday of Dia de los Muertos.

by Ryan Richards Editor

At first glance, Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado's colorful depictions of skeleton families, skeleton lovers and skeletons at work and play may evoke thoughts of the macabre.

But her painted images reflect just the opposite. They are poignant symbols of life.

The Santa Fe resident devotes her artistic talents to Los Muertos art. Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, is a much anticipated holiday in Latino culture that is celebrated in early November.

Her artwork represents and speaks from the same places of beauty and power that this holiday was built from, she points out. Los Muertos art is meant to show life and death as one eternal entity. You cannot have one without the other, Sullivan believes. In understanding death, as a part of life, you can embrace and accept it rather than fear it, according to the artist. It also encompasses the belief that souls are eternal, and that each new birth or death is simply another stage in our soul journey.

The symbol of the skeleton or skull is used to signify death and rebirth. Instead of fearing death, through these symbols are celebrated, embraced and considered to be a "moving-on" to a higher level of consciousness.

"Beyond the facade of different skin and appearances, the skeleton is an undying symbol of the truth that remains, underneath — we are all the same!", Sullivan de Maldonado stated. "We all live, we all die, but we all have the choice in every moment as to how well we will live. Use the meaning and imagery of Dia de los Muertos to inspire you to choose to live without fear holding you back, because once you accept death as an essential part of life, and make peace with it, you free yourself to live more fully in the now. The observance of Dia de los Muertos reminds us of our truest essence — our soul, and that our loved ones are just as important to us in their death, as they were in life. They are not gone, they have only passed on to a new stage in their soul journey. Remember to cherish and honor them — they remain as shining lights — loving us — guiding us — they are still a part of us and always will be."

The artist is married to John Maldonado, a Santa Fe native **14** October 2013

Santa Fe artist Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado's "thanksgiving" depicts the annual American celebration, complete with turkey and all the trimmings, but integrates the feast with the imagery of los Muertos. Photo courtesy of Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado

and artist. He often creates fanciful tin frames for his wife's artwork.

Sullivan de Maldonado, who earned an advanced illustration degree at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario, Canada, paints on tin, which she admits is a challenging surface.

"Many hours are spent just with the tin preparation," she explained. "There are many parts that go into one of our original tin paintings. John and I have to collaborate a lot before he even gets to work on his

portion of the project, the creation of his originally designed and hand-worked tin, which also becomes the canvas and elaborate frame to showcase the original painting. I begin to paint directly on the tin only once the tin is properly cleaned, worked and John's involved tinwork is complete."

An artful union

The two actually met on Feb. 14, Valentine's Day. At the time, he was a pilot and metal worker, a descendant of a long line of men in his family who had all been very skilled in the art of metal work and blacksmithing. She was a newly graduated art major who was in the final stages of an art internship through her college with prominent Santa Fe artist Joel Nakamura.

One night during their very first year together, as the story goes, John had a dream: He dreamt of himself hand forging an exquisitely designed tin frame. But this frame was different from any other frame he had ever crafted. Within his dream his tin work was accompanied by a beautiful, whimsical dance of characters and color within its center. Heeding his dream, he got to work on it the very next day. Sullivan de Maldonado, meanwhile, was finishing up a painting for a show consisting of half flesh, half skeleton characters when he called her over to see his finished creation.

Upon viewing each other's work, Sullivan de Maldonado spoke of his dream, and she responded by mentioning the ideas she had been having of her own to attempt a painting with "souly" skeleton characters. From that moment on their two art forms merged, each artist's visions complementing the work of the other.

Los Muertos Fine Art Works is de Maldonado's full-time business, but she also gets hired to do a variety of jobs from CD cover art and editorial illustrations to personal full-blown commission paintings. Most are commissioned within her "skeletal" theme, but depending on the client, some commissions require a completely different style.

Her favorite painting so far is called "The Reunion," which

"has always held a special place in our hearts." She explains the artwork:

"It is autumn in the graveyard. In the distance, a skeleton man waits in his open coffin, hands filled with a bottle and two glasses of untouched wine. An open plot, sits coffin-less, next to his with the words "Mi Amor" inscribed upon its weathered headstone. A horse-drawn hearse carrying his one true love, driven by the Reaper himself, enters and over the bridge heads along the windy path toward the waiting lover. A shooting star blazes through the star-speckled sky overhead. Under the full moon light, their wish is granted as they are reunited forevermore."

"Use the meaning and imagery of Dia de los Muertos to inspire you to choose to live without fear holding you back, because once you accept death as an essential part of life, and make peace with it, you free yourself to live more fully in the now." —Artist Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado

She is currently working on a new series of paintings focused on the fun and adventure of the outdoors, inspired by the couple's travels and adventures. Sullivan de Maldonado is also working for a client on a commissioned logo and images for a new T-shirt line (non-skeletal-themed). On the side, she is writing and illustrating her own fiction novel.

Her Day of the Dead imagery is also appearing on bags of locally made Amour Chocolates.

"We have been fortunate to have been able to collaborate with such fine local chocolatiers as Jeff and Kari Keenan, owners of Santa Fe's The ChocolateSmith! They create the chocolate, we create the art for various chocolate lines, and the collector ends up with an entirely unique, local, New Mexican made product every

time! We are always creating new original imagery, just as the Keenans are always creating new original chocolate combinations, to keep it fun and exciting for all to collect and enjoy!"

the history of dia de los Muertos

Dia de los Muertos is traditionally celebrated on Nov. 1 and Nov. 2 throughout Mexico and the Southwestern United States. For the celebration, Dia de los Muertos altars are created. Upon them, pictures of the deceased are placed, along with many favorite foods, drinks and activities the deceased cherished while they were alive. Candles are lit, which decorate the altars and graveyards to light the soul's way back home for this beautiful reunion. Trinkets and gifts these souls were fond of during life are brought to communicate to the deceased that they are still very alive in the hearts of those they left behind. The beauty of the lives they lived will continue to be remembered with joy, even though they no longer share in the same "physical" reality. People often compare Dia de los Muertos to Halloween.

While at first glance they may appear to be similar, in truth, the two celebrations are completely different. Halloween is a European holiday that is based on their concept of death. Dia de los Muertos is a Mexican holiday that is celebrated in order to remember and honor the lives of their "passed-on" loved ones.

Dia de los Muertos was originated by the Aztecs. Their beliefs coincided with those of the Australian Aborigines. Both tribes considered life to be a dream, and when you die, you awake to your real life. Halloween in comparison is celebrated through symbols of witches, demons and monsters, none of which are ever portrayed in a positive light.

Sullivan de Maldonado and her husband are looking forward to celebrating Dia de los Muertos themselves.

"We set up an altar in our home," she pointed out. "On it we place a photo of each of our deceased loved ones, family and friends, accompanied by what we remember to be their favorite foods, drinks and pastimes. We light candles between the nights of Oct. 31 - Nov. 2 to light their way home. We also set out water and wine for them to drink and refresh with. We spend this time reflecting on our fond memories of them. Feeling their presence close to us, we toast to the love and the life we feel grateful to have shared with them while they were alive and even still in their passing — they are always with us in spirit."

The couple's upcoming shows include a Day of the Dead Show at the Design Studio at the Hyatt, 201 3rd ST. NW, Albuquerque. The show runs until the end of November. Call 505-331-9084 for information; Santisima's 8th Annual Dia de los Muertos Celebration & Show at Old Town Albuquerque Plaza, Poco Apoco Patio Nov. 2, 6 -11 p.m. Call 505-246-2611 for information; and the 21st Annual Dia de los Muertos Celebration & Marigold Parade Show, Westside Community Center, 1250 Isleta Blvd. SW, Albuquerque Nov. 3, 2 p.m.- 6 p.m. Call 505-363-1326 or muertosymarigolds.org for information.

Visit losmuertosart.com or call 866-567-7232 or 505-515-4550 for information on the couple and their art.

Creative Santa Fe - June 7th, 2011

Article: 'Santa Fe Studio Tour, Win Fabulous Prizes, Photographer's Legal Workshop'

Story & Photography by: Dave Robinson

Meet local artists John and Stacey Maldonado in their studio. Two of 43 artists participating in June tour June 18, 10 am to 5 pm/ June 19, 12 noon to 4 pm.

Husband and wife team John and Stacey Maldonado are known for their bright, playful and iconic images of skeletons painted on hand tin work. References to Santa Fe culture can be found in most of their pieces. John and Stacey have created unique works that are in demand by private collectors and corporate clients. Their art is not available in local galleries and can only be seen at their private studio. You can visit them at studio #6 on the Santa Fe Studio Tour. Get directions to their studio and all the studios in the tour

'Los Muertos Fine Art Works Santa Fe's Rising Art Stars'

Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado and John Maldonado are a husband and wife team who began their amazing collaboration six years ago. John, a native New Mexican, was a metal craftsman by trade who did tin work as a relaxing hobby. His hobby has turned into a full time profession. Stacey has been in New Mexico for nine years and considers Santa Fe the home of her dreams. She has a graphic arts base. She couldn't resist painting a scene in the middle of one of John's tin creations and the rest is history being made.

The third part of their story was the expected arrival of their son Stacey gathered the confidence she needed to leave her full time employment and go after her life-long dream of becoming a full time artist. It wasn't long before she figured out how to create and sell her art, thus Los Muertos Fine Art Works was created.

Together, John and Stacy have created a very unique product that has become an almost immediate success with corporate collaborations, commissions, art shows and private collectors keeping them busy. They haven't presented their work to local galleries as yet so the only way that the general public can see their work is through venues like The Santa Fe Studio Tour. This year they will be studio #6 and a must see on the tour.

The Santa Fe Studio tour is made up of 29 studios featuring 43 artists this June 18th and 19th. A free preview party will be open to the public on June 17th from 5-7pm and will have a door prize drawing at 6:30pm. The gallery will be open during tour hours all weekend. Located at Santa Fe University of Art and Design in the Fine Arts Gallery at 1600 St. Michael's Drive, we hope to see you there. Come meet all of your favorite artists. Get a map of the studio locations on line at www.SantaFeStudioTour.com or pick up a brochure at the preview party. Brochures will be available at numerous locations around town as well.

Santa Fe Studio Tour is a proud project of Creative Santa Fe.

www.CreativeSantaFe.Org

Santa Fe Travelers.com - May 31st, 2011

Article: Tidbits: SF in WSJ and NY Mag, NM Green chile cheeseburger trail and more...

Story By: Billie Frank

Read full story here: <http://www.santafetravelers.com/tidbits-news-of-tourism-and-hospitality-for-santa-fe-and-northern-new-mexico/tidbits-santa-fe-in-wsj-and-ny-mag-nm-green-chile-cheeseburger-trail-and-more/>

Vibrant Santa Fe.com - October, 2010

Article: 'Dia de los Muertos *Lives*'

Story By: Daniél Morgan

Santa Fe, New Mexico is a vibrant place, people come from all over the world to experience Santa Fe's soul. One of the things that makes this place so special is the wonderful mingling of diverse cultures. We celebrate a wonderful mix of native American, Indigenous Central and South American, Spanish and European influences. There is a rich heritage of honoring the different traditions and celebrations of the many peoples who make this their home....

...Culture continually changes and evolves, so it is no surprise that the Day of the Dead has taken on a unique flavor here in northern New Mexico. In the last few decades, a vibrant and unique Dia de los Muertos artistic movement has begun to flower in Santa Fe. Local artists **Stacey & John Maldonado, Los Muertos Fine Art Works**, have made a name for themselves with their bright, playful and iconic images of skeletons painted on hand tin work. References to Santa Fe culture can be found in most of their work (rock climbing, motorcycles, mountain bikes, the stairway at Loretto Chapel, and fiesta on the Plaza are just a few examples). This rich soil of diversity has given Nuevo Mexico's Dia de los Muertos celebrations and iconography a special flair, all our own...

Read Full Story here:

<http://www.vibrantsantafe.com/Detailed/36.html>

Article: 'Skeleton Crew - New Mexico Artists celebrate'

El Dia de los Muertos

Story By: Johnny D. Boggs

...Growing up in Toronto, **Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado** wasn't familiar with the holiday until she arrived in New Mexico. Her husband **John Maldonado**, didn't celebrate the Day of the Dead as a child, but at their **Los Muertos Fine Art Works** studio in Santa fe, they focus on original images featuring Stacey's acrylic paintings on John's tin surfaces. "A lot of times, people think John does the paintings and I do the tinwork," Stacey says. "It's relaxing." John says of the tinwork. "I can just express myself and don't feel so stressed." The couple have also worked together on commissioned pieces for private customers and corporations, including a large-scale Day of the Dead painting on tin at the Santa fe Baking Company (504 W. Cordova Rd.) They find that the fascination with death images never grows old. "It's such a beautiful celebration," Stacey says. "It totally transcends boundaries. Anybody can relate to it."...

Local IQ - Albuquerque's Intelligent Alternative

July 16-29, 2009 Article: *'Raising the dead'*

Story By: Kendra Tuthill

John and Stacey Maldonado, Santa Fe artists known for their collaborative tin and paint works, will also be showing large and small originals along with prints of all their works. The couple began working together seven years ago when John made a frame of punched tin and Stacey painted happy *calaveras*, or skulls, directly on it. John, a New Mexico native, grew up working on large iron and steel projects with his family. "I didn't really learn with tin metal," John said. "But I know how metal works; my father owned a welding shop."

John and Stacey's media meshed perfectly into an artistic product that is both traditional in its cultural theme while strikingly modern in its design. Their Day of the Dead paintings now hang in such places as the Santa Fe Baking Company and Cafe and the National Hispanic Cultural Center shop.

"I used to think art had to be profound and had to make a full statement to be noticed," said Stacey, an art major who migrated to the Southwest [from?]. "All of the work I do is simply based on our life, places we'll go, trips, neighbors, members of our family ... We love the Day of the Dead's meaning. There's no discrimination. Anybody from any culture can relate to it on their own."

http://www.local-iq.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1266&Itemid=55

The New Mexican - Pasatiempo

July 27 - August 2, 2007

Article: *'Traditional Spanish Market and Contemporary Spanish Market'*

Story By: Elizabeth Cook-Romero

John Maldonado and Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado don't even attempt to keep their skeletons in the closet. When bony creatures are spirited enough to slide and rattle down the state's most famous banister - on Loretto Chapel's staircase - how could they be kept under wraps? Stacey paints a cartoon version of New Mexico's landscape populated with chattering lovers, bikers and revelers on tin plaques fashioned by her husband, John. Her cavorting dead don't just come out after dark; they play under crystal-blue skies and dance past sunrise. The couple has decorated frames with tiny tin blossoms. One ornate piece comes with appendages that look like feathered wings. Even the simplest of their creations are way over the top.

SF Reporter *Top Pick*

October 24-30, 2007

Visual Arts Listings: 'Celebrate the dead at Mi Corazon Chocolate and Gallery'

Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado and John Maldonado's traditional *Dia de los Muertos* artwork mixes punched tin and vibrant colors that bring life to the afterlife.

Exhibit showcases 'Los Muertos'

Mi Corazón Chocolate & Gallery, 839 Paseo de Peralta, Suite K, presents *Los Muertos*, an exhibit that features original Day of the Dead-themed pieces by local artists **Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado and John Maldonado**. The exhibit, which opened Oct. 26, runs through Nov. 30.

Mi Corazón, which is tucked behind Arte del Mundo, features organic Venezuelan chocolate and artisanal truffles and drops, as well as Day of the Dead-themed specialties. It's open 1 to 5 p.m. Monday; 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday; 1 to 5 p.m. Friday; and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday. Call 505-417-3105 for more information.

http://www.santafenewmexican.com/Food/Food_briefs_oct3107

SF Reporter *Top Pick*

Visual Arts Listings 2003

Stacey Sullivan de Maldonado draws a simple line like nobody's business, and when she melds her quality of line with an adult subconscious the result is a stunning array of work...