



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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El Día de los Muertos at Cheekwood Celebrates Life, Family and Remembrance *27th Annual Festival Brings the Traditions of Mexico and Latin America to Nashville*

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Cheekwood Estate & Gardens will celebrate 27 years of El Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, on October 31 and November 1, inviting guests to experience the vibrant traditions of a holiday that honors deceased loved ones and celebrates the enduring bonds of family and community.

The two-day festival will feature community *ofrendas*, large-scale murals created by Nashville-area middle and high school students, traditional food and artisan vendors, hands-on art activities, and a full schedule of dance and musical performances.

El Día de los Muertos will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Tickets are on sale now at cheekwood.org.

Cheekwood's celebration began in 2000 in recognition of Nashville's growing Hispanic community. Throughout the event's history, Cheekwood has collaborated with an Advisory Committee of members of the Hispanic community to help guide the festival and ensure it is presented with respect for the traditions it celebrates.

"Day of the Dead at Cheekwood is a meaningful celebration that invites everyone to learn about, appreciate, and experience the rich cultural traditions of Mexico," said Arcelia Vázquez, a member of the Advisory Committee for El Día de los Muertos at Cheekwood. "At its heart, this is a celebration of family, community, love, and remembrance. It honors the tradition of welcoming back, for a brief reunion, the souls of ancestors and loved ones who have passed away. Through memories, stories, and shared traditions, we celebrate their lives and keep their spirits close. We invite everyone to join us in honoring loved ones and experiencing the beauty and enduring traditions of El Día de los Muertos."

Altars

One of the most important elements of El Día de los Muertos is the creation of a memorial altar, or *ofrenda*, for those who have passed away. Families decorate altars with photographs, flowers, food and other meaningful objects associated with their

loved ones. At Cheekwood, guests can explore *ofrendas* created by local groups and organizations inside Massey Auditorium.

Music and Dance

Saturday, October 31 | Arboretum Lawn

9–10 a.m. – DJ Cesar
10–10:30 a.m. – Dance Performance by Danza Azteca Guadalupeana
10:30–11 a.m. – Musical Performance by singer/songwriter Karina Daza
11–11:30 a.m. – Dance Performance by Mi Cielito Lindo
11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m. – Musical Performance by Lion B
12:15–12:45 p.m. – Dance Performance by Grupo Folklórico Raíces de mi Tierra
12:45–1:30 p.m. – Musical Performance by De Agave y Son
1:30–2 p.m. – DJ Cesar
2–2:30 p.m. – Dance Performance by Danza Azteca Guadalupeana
2:30–3:15 p.m. – Musical Performance by Rosa Rodriguez
3:15–3:30 p.m. – Fashion Show featuring La Catrinas
3:30–4 p.m. – DJ Cesar
4–4:30 p.m. – Dance Performance by Sol De Mexico Ballet Folklorico
4:30–5 p.m. – Dance Performance by Folklore Iyali

Sunday, November 1 | Arboretum Lawn

9–10 a.m. – DJ Cesar
10–10:30 a.m. – Dance Performance by Danza Azteca Guadalupeana
10:30–11 a.m. – Musical Performance by Sofia Rhiannon and Gabriella Flores-Rodriguez
11–11:30 a.m. – Dance Performance by Las Cuervonitas
11:30 a.m.–12:15 p.m. – Musical Performance by Rachel Rodriguez
12:15–12:45 p.m. – Dance Performance by Lirios Folklóricos
12:45–1:30 p.m. – Musical Performance by De Agave y Son
1:30–2 p.m. – DJ Cesar
2–2:30 p.m. – Dance Performance by Danza Azteca Guadalupeana
2:30–3:15 p.m. – Musical Performance by Rosa Rodriguez
3:15–3:30 p.m. – Fashion Show featuring La Catrinas
3:30–4 p.m. – DJ Cesar
4–4:30 p.m. – Dance Performance by Folklore Iyali

Art and Activities

9 a.m. – 4 p.m. | Frist Learning Center Courtyard

Marigold Flower Crowns

Flowers are an essential element of El Día de los Muertos, particularly the marigold, or *cempasúchil*. Marigolds are used to decorate *ofrendas* and are traditionally believed to

help guide the souls of the dead to the altars prepared for them. Guests can create paper marigolds and attach them to a headband to wear throughout the day.

Monarch Butterflies

Monarch butterflies have become associated with El Día de los Muertos in part because their annual migration to Mexico coincides with the holiday. Guests can create their own monarch butterflies as a way to honor and remember a loved one.

Papel Picado Coloring Sheet

Papel picado is a traditional Mexican folk art made by cutting intricate designs into tissue paper. Often used to decorate streets, homes and memorial altars, *papel picado* features colorful designs and imagery with cultural significance. Guests can learn about some of the traditional symbols found in *papel picado* while creating their own miniature decorations.

Memory Tree

Honor the spirit of El Día de los Muertos by writing the name or memory of a loved one on a colorful slip of paper and adding it to the Memory Tree in Massey Auditorium.

Photo opportunity with Catrina & Catrin Puppets

Skeleton puppets inside the Frist Learning Center Great Hall provide a memorable photo opportunity for guests. *La Catrina*, the iconic skeletal figure created by Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada, has become one of the most recognizable symbols associated with El Día de los Muertos.

Murals

Students in grades six through 12 will create large-scale murals inspired by the art and imagery associated with El Día de los Muertos. The student works will be on display in the Frist Learning Center Great Hall throughout the festival, providing a colorful showcase of Nashville-area student creativity and artistic expression.

Artisan and Food Vendors

Local artists, makers, restaurants and bakeries will offer art, jewelry, gifts and traditional foods, giving guests an opportunity to shop, sample and learn more about the traditions surrounding El Día de los Muertos.

Ticket Information

The event is free for Cheekwood members and youth ages 3–17, as well as children ages 2 and under. Tickets for non-members are \$18–\$23 for adults. All tickets include access to the Historic Mansion & Museum. Tickets are available at cheekwood.org.

Cheekwood is offering free off-site parking with trolley transportation every weekend in October. Guests who park at the Belle Meade Office Park, located at 4525 Harding Road, can take a complimentary trolley from the parking lot to Cheekwood and save \$10 or more on admission.

El Día de los Muertos is supported by HCA, Nissan Foundation and Nashville Skyline Pediatric Dentistry.

About Cheekwood Estate & Gardens

With its intact and picturesque vistas, Cheekwood is distinguished as one of the leading Country Place Era estates in the nation. Formerly the family home of Mabel and Leslie Cheek, the 1930s estate, with its 30,000-square-foot Mansion and 55-acres of gardens, today serves the public as a botanical garden, arboretum, and art museum with furnished period rooms and galleries devoted to American art from the 18th to mid-20th centuries. The property includes 13 distinct gardens including the Blevins Japanese Garden and the Bracken Foundation Children's Garden, as well as a 1.5-mile woodland trail featuring outdoor monumental sculpture. Each year, Cheekwood hosts seasonal festivals including Cheekwood in Bloom, Summertime at Cheekwood, Cheekwood Harvest and Holiday LIGHTS. Cheekwood is a 501c3 nonprofit charitable organization. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and nationally as a Level II Arboretum. It is a four-time voted USA Today Top 10 Botanical Garden, named the Most Beautiful Garden in Tennessee in 2025 by HGTV, in 2024 and 2025 received a Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice Award, and in 2021 was named by Fodors as one of the 12 Most Beautiful Gardens in the American South. Cheekwood is located eight miles southwest of downtown Nashville at 1200 Forrest Park Drive. It is open Tuesday through Sunday, 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., with extended days and hours of operation depending on the season. Visit cheekwood.org for current hours and to purchase advance tickets required for admission.

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Images for Media

<https://show.pics.io/press-images/collection/66fffe9891652ff4eb87a7a7>

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