



Día de Muertos Celebration Ballet Folklórico Mexicano de Carlos Moreno





RHYTHMIX CULTURAL WORKS



Dear Teachers and Educators,

Rhythmix is excited to have you and your students join us for the 2022-23 season of **PAL - Performance, Art & Learning**. PAL assemblies are designed to foster awareness of world cultures, stimulate a sense of pride in students' cultural heritage and deepen connections to their communities.

PAL assemblies also serve as a catalyst for arts learning and a springboard for integrating arts education into your classroom.

To help your students gain the most out of each PAL assembly, we suggest that the learning begin before, and continue after, every performance.

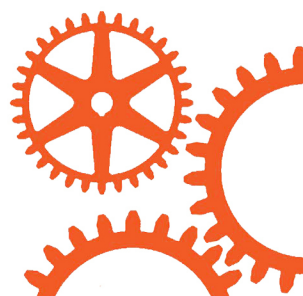
Utilizing the resources provided, your students can engage more fully with the performance experience, connecting what they see and hear to their personal lives, culture, community and any school subjects you choose.

Aligning with the **California Arts Standards**, the accompanying study guides and slide sets help foster students' artistic competencies, cultivate their appreciation and understanding of the arts, and support them to fully engage in lifelong arts learning.

At Rhythmix, we believe exposure to the arts can be a transformative experience, helping us to learn about ourselves, each other, and the world.

Thank you for joining us on this journey,

Your PALs at Rhythmix





Ballet Folklórico Mexicano de Carlos Moreno

Founded in 1967 by Carlos Moreno-Samaniego, the Ballet Folklórico Mexicano has achieved recognition both in the United States and in Mexico. In 1980, the Mexican consulate in San Francisco named the company the official ambassador for ongoing cultural activities with Mexico. It has held that distinction for over forty years during which time it regularly conducts tours in Mexican cities such as Guadalajara, Oaxaca, Aguascalientes, and Durango.



Drawing on the artistic variety of Mexico's different regions, the Ballet Folklórico Mexicano has a dance repertory of 120 pieces. Many of these are presented in their traditional form while others have been restaged to include artistic elements from more contemporary choreography. In this way, the indigenous rhythms of Tarascan Indian dances from central Mexico stand in sharp contrast to the Spanish military and courtship dances from that region. Similarly, the African influences that characterize dances from the Gulf of Mexico are juxtaposed by Mexican polkas that mark the influence of eastern European from the north. In her review of the company, Jennifer Fisher, the celebrated dance critic for the Los Angeles Times, noted that the Ballet "has much appeal. They are tightly rehearsed and (their) choreography is inventive."

The Ballet Folklórico Mexicano maintains an active performance agenda. The company's yearly *Navidad in Mexico* show is a highlight for the entire Bay Area Community. The troupe also tours regularly in the western and southwestern United States.



The BFM is proud of its vast regional repertoire, but also excels at thematic choreography. Such choreographies like “Blanca Navidad” and “Las Posadas” are favorites of the “*Navidad en Mexico*” production. Others, such as “Las Adelitas” and “La Marieta” represent the period of the Mexican Revolution. In the “*Dia de Muertos*” production we are treated to the “Danza de Muertos” and “Danza de Diablo y Calaca”, two BFM original choreographies.

GEOGRAPHY

Mexico lies to the south of the United States and borders the states of California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Although the country is located in North America, the country of Mexico is often defined as part of Latin America.

Physical Features

The Gulf of California and the Pacific Ocean define the western coast of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea form Mexico's eastern coastline. The Rio Grande, Mexico's longest river, serves as a border with the state of Texas. The Sierra Madre Occidental (west) and the Sierra Madre Oriental (east) are the two major mountain ranges in Mexico.

Climate

The Mexican climate varies sharply from one region to the next. Northern Mexico is arid with desert terrain. Significant mountain ranges in Southern Mexico create three distinct climatic zones; Tierra Fria (cold land) at elevations above 6,000 ft., Tierra Templada (temperate land) and Tierra Caliente (hot land) in coastal regions tending to be humid.

States

Mexico is divided into 31 states and 1 Federal District.

Can you find them all on the map below?



STATES OF MEXICO

NAME _____

K	Z	S	G	U	E	R	R	E	R	O	B	A	B	J	P	N	A	Y	A	R	I	T	A	M	T
E	O	A	U	Q	U	I	N	T	A	N	A	R	O	O	X	V	C	D	K	L	H	A	B	O	A
S	I	N	A	L	O	A	O	P	L	V	J	A	L	I	S	C	O	I	G	J	D	M	N	P	B
T	W	L	N	Z	A	C	A	T	E	C	A	S	U	W	E	F	C	H	I	H	U	A	H	U	A
V	X	U	A	G	D	R	F	W	O	M	C	Y	U	C	A	T	A	N	R	S	R	U	U	V	S
E	H	I	J	I	N	U	A	K	R	N	A	X	U	Q	Z	Q	M	T	Y	Z	A	L	W	X	C
R	E	S	U	J	S	N	U	E	V	O	L	E	O	N	P	A	P	V	W	X	N	I	J	K	O
A	K	P	A	T	B	M	Q	U	O	Y	I	Y	A	O	F	U	E	B	D	I	G	P	L	Q	P
C	Q	O	T	X	E	Z	G	T	Z	R	F	B	N	G	E	C	C	H	M	N	O	A	O	U	Q
R	Y	T	O	D	F	M	E	X	I	C	O	M	H	T	A	C	H	I	A	P	A	S	R	E	O
U	C	O	O	A	X	A	C	A	X	C	R	I	S	Z	P	U	E	B	L	A	F	N	Q	R	P
Z	L	S	C	Y	F	K	O	W	D	L	N	R	Y	S	Y	A	D	E	J	L	M	S	R	E	J
I	G	I	E	B	A	J	A	C	A	L	I	F	O	R	N	I	A	S	U	R	F	K	A	T	H
M	S	V	I	M	I	C	H	O	A	C	A	N	V	Z	Y	C	B	O	Z	T	O	M	B	A	I
Z	H	N	R	S	V	E	U	M	Q	B	N	T	W	A	B	I	G	N	E	N	L	P	R	R	D
T	P	J	D	U	F	K	I	P	C	C	O	L	I	M	A	K	M	O	R	E	L	O	S	O	A
H	W	C	T	G	J	K	L	O	D	F	R	U	X	D	C	H	U	R	W	D	W	C	A	S	L
L	B	S	H	I	J	L	A	N	E	G	T	L	A	X	C	A	L	A	H	V	Q	T	E	X	G
A	Q	A	G	U	A	S	C	A	L	I	E	N	T	E	S	V	G	X	I	Y	O	U	I	Z	O

Find all 31 States.

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----|-----------------|
| 1 | AGUASCALIENTES | 17 | NUEVO LEON |
| 2 | BAJA CALIFORNIA NORTE | 18 | OAXACA |
| 3 | BAJA CALIFORNIA SUR | 19 | PUEBLA |
| 4 | CAMPECHE | 20 | QUERETARO |
| 5 | CHIAPAS | 21 | QUINTANA ROO |
| 6 | CHI HUAHUA | 22 | SAN LUIS POTOSI |
| 7 | COAHUILA | 23 | SINALOA |
| 8 | COLIMA | 24 | SONORA |
| 9 | DURANGO | 25 | TABASCO |
| 10 | GUANAJUATO | 26 | TAMAULIPAS |
| 11 | HIDALGO | 27 | TLAXCALA |
| 12 | JALISCO | 28 | VERACRUZ |
| 13 | MEXICO | 29 | YUCATAN |
| 14 | MICHOACAN | 30 | ZACATECAS |
| 15 | MORELOS | 31 | GUERRERO |
| 16 | NAYARIT | | |

DIA DE MUERTOS

The *Dia de Muertos* production originated in 2005. In this production the BFM shares many of the danzas and more ritualistic pieces which pay homage to those who have passed on. It shows how Dia de Muertos is a celebration of the life of loved ones. A time to share the wonders our loved ones enjoyed.



HISTORY of DIA DE MUERTOS

Dia de Muertos or Day of the Dead, can be traced back several thousand years before Mexico existed as a country. The Aztec's cyclical belief in life and death resulted in a celebration of death, rather than a fear of death. Death was simply a continuation of life, just another plane of existence.



Once a year the Aztecs held a festival celebrating the death of their ancestors while honoring the goddess *Mictecacihuatl*, Queen of the Underworld or Lady of the Dead. They believed that the deceased preferred to be celebrated rather than mourned. During this festival they first honored *los angelitos*, the deceased children, as well as those who passed away as adults. The festival lasted for an entire month, and coincided with the corn harvest.



After the Spaniards conquered the Aztecs in 1521, they tried to make the Aztecs adopt their Catholic beliefs. As Catholics, they tried their best to eradicate the old Aztec rituals and fully convert the indigenous people over to their Catholic beliefs but they failed. What resulted was more of a blend of beliefs. The Spanish conquerors succeeded in shortening the length of the *Mictecacihuatl* festival to 2 days which conveniently corresponded with two of their own Catholic holidays, All Saints Day, November 1 and All Souls Day, November 2. The Spanish convinced the indigenous people to attend special masses on those days to commemorate the dead as they tried to shift the original *Dia de Muertos* meaning to best suit their own Catholic purpose.



Over the centuries these traditions have transformed into the present *Dia de Muertos*, bestowing it with color, flavor and fervor that has made it a world famous holiday. Even the Aztec goddess *Mictecacihuatl* found a new identity as the modern “Catrina” the lanky, skeletal female figure dressed in luxurious clothing and a giant ornate hat, who serves as a reminder that death is fate and that even the rich can’t avoid. The Day of the Dead in Mexico represents a mixture of Christian devotion and pre-Hispanic traditions and beliefs. As a result of this mixture, the celebration comes to life as a unique Mexican tradition including an altar and offerings dedicated to the deceased.



DIA DE MUERTOS TRADITIONS

Visiting and Decorating the Cemetery

It is tradition to festively decorate the local cemetery with flowers, candles, arts and crafts. On Day of the Dead, visitors will spend the whole day and night celebrating the deceased with food, drink, music and dancing.



Cempasuchil (Marigold Flowers) and Arcos (Arches)

The use of the Cempasuchil flower is common for Dia de Muertos celebrations. It is believed that the scent of the Cempasuchil guides the spirits through the underworld and that the Arcos (Arches), create a direct path from the land of the dead to the land of the living.

Images of Calacas (Skeletons)

Figurines of La Calaca (skeleton) are used to decorate altars and tombs. This is a way of connecting the physical existence of life after death.



Sugar Skulls

Sugar skulls are candy created in the form of a colorful skull. They are placed on Altars to be enjoyed by both the living and the dead.



Altars (Altars)

Altars are created to honor the deceased. The altars are placed at cemeteries, churches, homes or community places. Altars are decorated with photos, flowers, sugar skulls, candles, arts and crafts. Family and friends bring offerings of the deceased favorite things, such as food and drinks and maybe a favorite toy.



FUN ACTIVITIES

(Artwork created by Chalome Gonzalez – “Mi Camisa”)



MEXICO



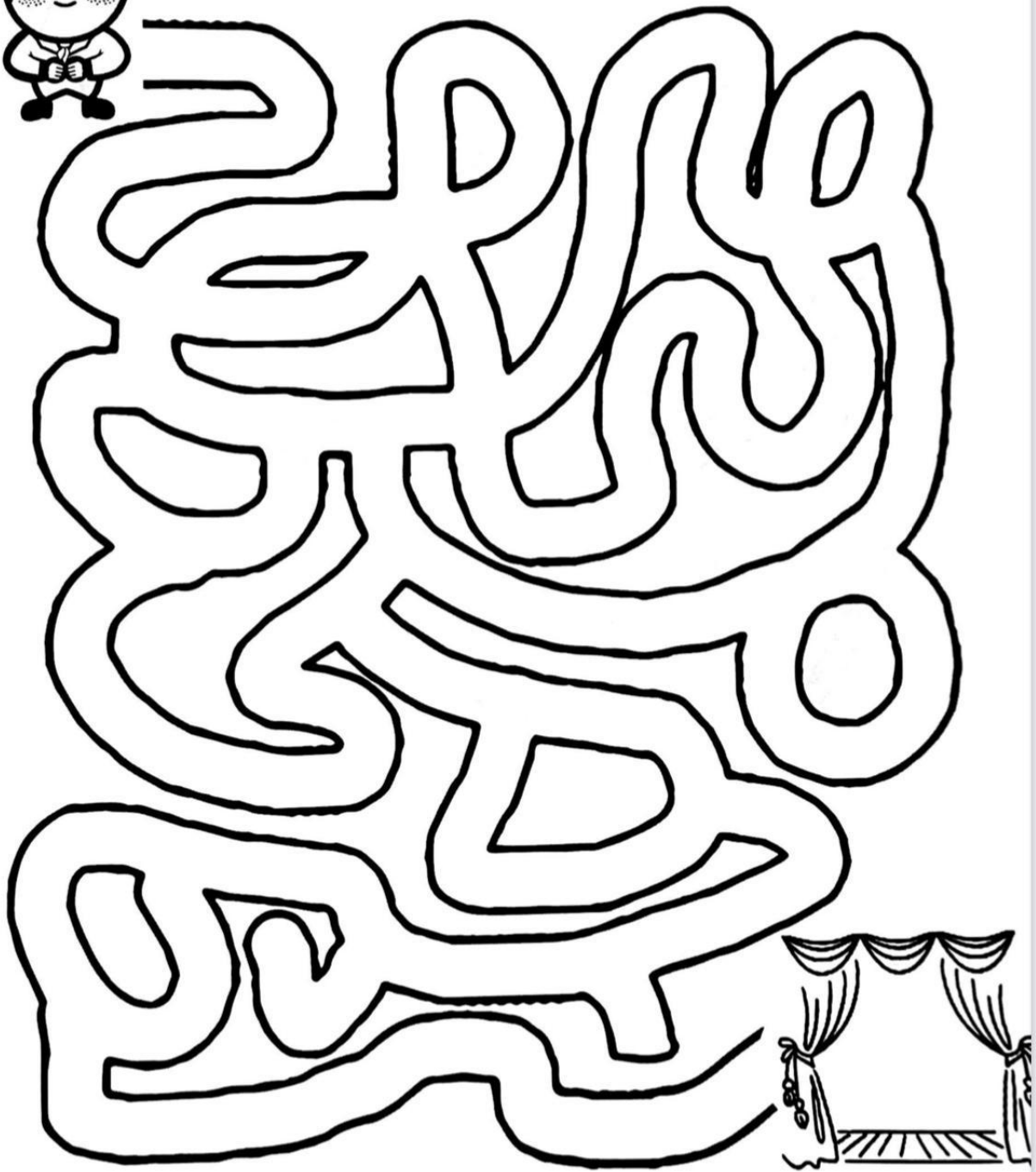
Danza de los
Viejitos



MiiCamisa

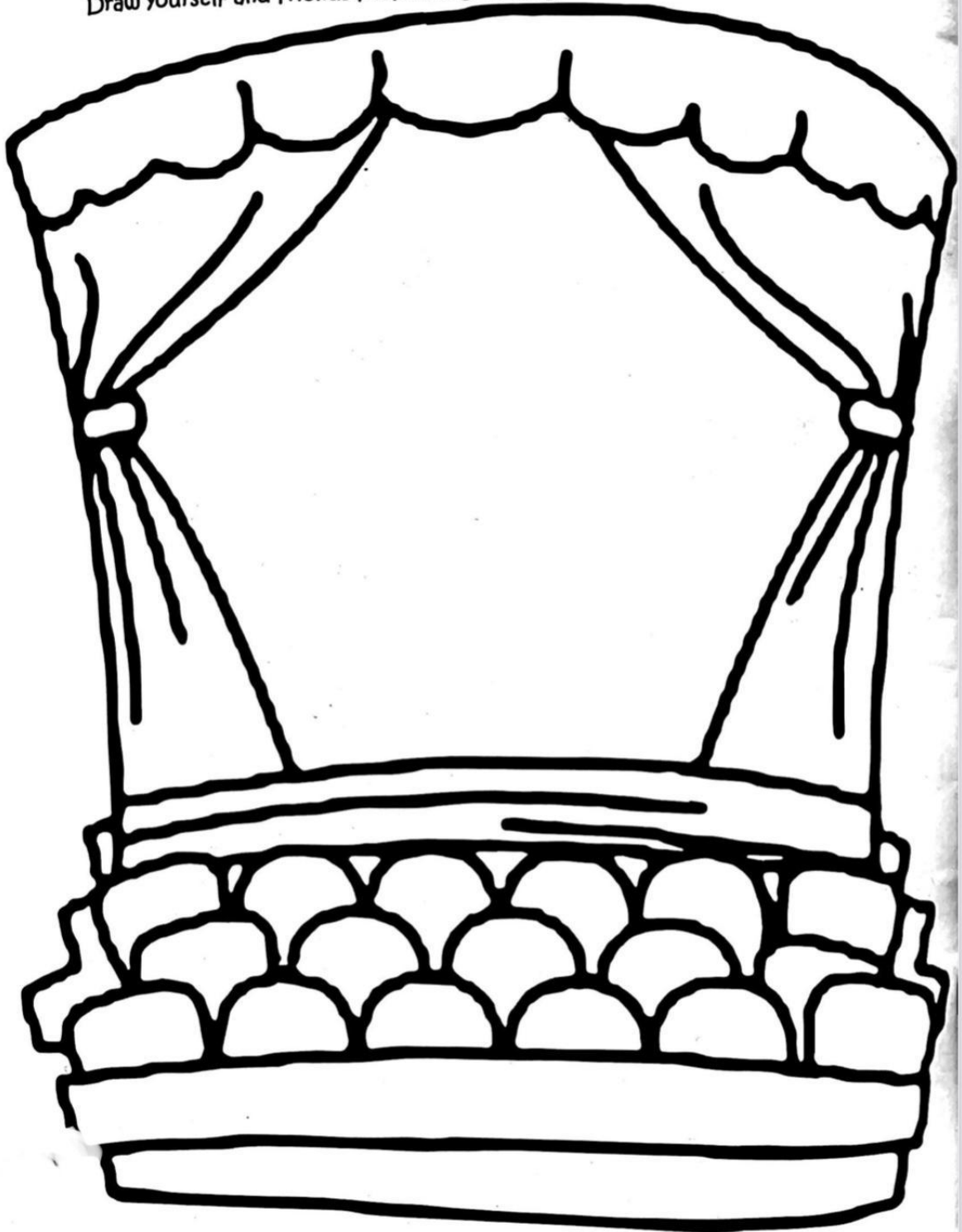


Help this dancer find his way to the stage!



You are the STAR!

Draw yourself and friends performing on stage



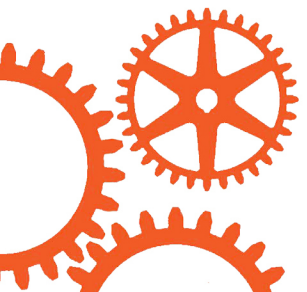


Thank You!

Thank you for joining Rhythmix Cultural Works and Ballet Folklórico Mexicano de Carlos Moreno. We look forward to seeing you next time!



For more info about Rhythmix, please visit: www.rhythmix.org



About Rhythmix Cultural Works

Rhythmix Cultural Works brings people of all ages together to experience and explore music, dance, visual art and educational opportunities. The organization seeks to build community by inspiring engagement in the arts as a way to learn about each other and the world. With a strong commitment to provide programming relevant to the local population, Rhythmix strives to promote cultural awareness, encourage participation in the arts, and support local artists in the presentation of their work.

Since Rhythmix opened its doors in 2007, the community-based arts facility has built its reputation through the artistic excellence and cultural depth of its programming. To date, more than 150,000 people have engaged in arts experiences, attending high-quality performances of world music, dance, theater, exhibits and community events, as well as enrolling in classes for youth and adults in the arts, crafts, and movement-based practices from other cultures.

About PAL - Performance, Art & Learning

Rhythmix Cultural Works believes that exposure to the arts can be a transformative experience and a catalyst for cultural celebration. In support of this vision, Rhythmix developed PAL as an assembly-based youth arts education program in collaboration with the Alameda Unified School District. PAL fosters awareness of world cultures and empowers underserved youth through exposure to educational music and dance performances.

After two years of presenting PAL virtually in response to the pandemic, Rhythmix is excited to host PAL live again in its theater for the 2022-23 school year, with virtual in Alameda County. Thanks to the belief in the power of arts education and generous support from our funders and sponsors, PAL has served over 50,000 students since it launched in 2012.



Thanks to our PAL Funders and Partners

RADIUM



Robert L. Lippert
Foundation



Laurel
Scheinman

Lauren & Joshua
Cook

Shuler-Heimburger
Family Fund

and supporters like YOU!

This study guide was written and developed by Ballet Folklorico Mexicano de Carlos Moreno with additional design modifications by Rhythmix Cultural Works.

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