

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Local Artist Brings Día de los Muertos Exhibit to ImagineIF Libraries

Kalispell, MT – ImagineIF Libraries brings a new cultural art installation to the Kalispell location this fall. The public is invited to view a Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) exhibit by local artist Johnny Ratka Skinner on display from October 20th through November 6th. This traditional display serves as a cultural expression of Mexican and Latino cultural heritage and allows observants to connect with their departed loved ones and to honor their ancestry.

While originating within what is now Mexico, Día de los Muertos is now celebrated by millions of people of Mexican and Latin American descent throughout the Southwest and the entire United States. The ancestral altar on exhibit at ImagineIF Kalispell is dedicated to the artist's paternal third great-grandmother. Offerings reflect the eclectic blend of Mexican, Indigenous, Southwestern and Southern (United States) cultural heritage of the artist. Viewers can learn about the items numbered on the ofrenda (alter) by reading the corresponding index.

Artist Johnny Ratka Skinner was born and raised in Texas and has called the Flathead Valley home for the last 10 years after relocating from Dallas with his husband of 17 years. When he is not enjoying the amazing natural scenery of the Flathead, Johnny spends most free time cooking for friends and family, sharing his love of Southern (United States) and Southwest cuisine. Johnny also spends much of his time advocating on behalf of a local non-profit, Valley Neighbors, which seeks to make the Flathead a more welcoming environment for immigrants of all types.

ImagineIF Libraries is excited to showcase this authentic work to the community and inspire patrons to explore cultural diversity through their collections and materials. The library welcomes the opportunity for local artists to display artwork for public viewing in their exhibit spaces. Artists are encouraged to apply at [imagineiflibraries.org/events/art-exhibits/](https://www.imagineiflibraries.org/events/art-exhibits/).

ImagineIF Libraries' mission is to provide safe and fair access to information for everyone in Flathead County. For more information, visit www.imagineiflibraries.org.

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