**For Immediate Release March 8, 2018
Florida CraftArt presents:
*“Dia de los Muertos – A Celebration of Life”*
Exhibition dates: April 6 to May 29, 2018**

**Florida CraftArt**501 Central Ave., St. Petersburg, FL 33701
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Florida CraftArt presents “Dia de los Muertos – A Celebration of Life.” 42 artists from around the country have been selected from a call to artists to submit works that represent, in their own vision, the theme of Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead). AARP is the presenting sponsor of the exhibition.

The works represent a variety of fine-craft media including ceramic, wood, glass, fiber, metal and mixed media. The curator of the show is Mark Noll, a St. Petersburg artist whose works are collected worldwide. Mr. Noll said, “Dia de los Muertos is a celebration of the departed. I asked artists to explore remembrance and the celebration of those who have left us, to express the bonds that tie us to those who have moved on and how they affected our lives. This exhibition is a study of the past from a place in the present, a requiem for our loved ones and friends.”

A section of the exhibition showcases 160 sugar skull-shaped wood plaques decorated by invited artists to raise funds for children’s programs at Florida CraftArt. These artists come not only from the United States, but also from Canada and Australia. The curator noted that “Sugar skulls are such a prominent part of Day of the Dead. These all started with the same plywood skull-shaped forms, but each artist brought his or her own unique vision, some fun and playful while others were imbued with deep personal meaning.” Forty-five percent of the proceeds from the sale of these skulls will go directly to the children’s programs and many of the artists have also donated their commissions to the fund.

Dirk Armstrong, assistant curator for the Dali Museum will choose the awards that will be presented at the opening reception on Friday, April 6 at 5:30 to 8:30 pm. Many of the artists will attend the opening. People are encouraged to theme dress for the opening and traditional face painting will be available from 4:30 p.m. Skull-shaped chocolates and cookies will be served at the receptions.

Programming for the exhibition includes artistic workshops, lectures and performances.

**Exhibition programming schedule (free of charge unless indicated):**

**Friday, April 6, 4:30 p.m.:** Face painting for adults. $15 per person.

**Friday, April 6, 5:30-8:30 p.m.:** Opening reception. Skull-shaped chocolates and cookies will be served.

**Sunday, April 8, 2-4 p.m.:** Sugar skull and cookie decorating workshop. $5 per person, supplies included.

**Saturday, April 14, 2:30-4:30 p.m.:** Workshop: Learn how to paint a sugar skull on a wine glass. No experience necessary, supplies provided. $30.

**Saturday, April 14, 5:45 p.m.:** Concert: Lauren Mullinaux on cello and Skyler Golden on guitar.

**Sunday, April 15, 2-4 p.m.:** Keep St. Pete Lit Sunlit Festival presents “Sugar Skull Inspired Memories” performance.

**Thursday, April 19, 5:30-7 p.m.:** Taste and learn about modern Dia de los Muertos and its centuries old traditions with Tina Avila owner of Casa Tina Restaurant. $15.

**Sunday, April 22, 4 p.m.:** Curator Mark Noll, artist/writer Courtney Graham and other artists share secret stories of the sugar skulls.

**Saturday, April 28, 1-3 p.m.:** Keep St. Pete Lit Ekphrastic writing workshop. $20.

**Saturday, May 5, 2 p.m.:** Lecture by Kent Lydecker “Death, Be Not Proud: Art and Memory Across the Ages.” He retired as the Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, St. Petersburg, Florida. He has a Ph.D. in art history from John Hopkins University.

**Sunday, May 12, 2:30-4:30 p.m.:** Workshop: Learn how to paint a flower on a wine glass – Great gift for Mother’s Day. No experience necessary, supplies provided. $30.

**Friday, May 18, 5:30-7 p.m.:** AARP-sponsors Armed Forces Day recognition with presentations by veterans who are artists.

**Sunday, May 20, 2-4 p.m.:** Watch an Ekphrastic performance as writers interpret the Dia de los Muertos art. Presented by Keep St. Pete Lit. $15.

**Saturday, May 26, 5:30-7:30 p.m.:** Closing reception and People’s Choice Award presentation. Skull-shaped chocolates and cookies will be served.

Florida CraftArt is located at 501 Central Avenue in St. Petersburg. For more information, visit [www.FloridaCraftArt.org](http://www.FloridaCraftArt.org) or call (727) 821-7391. Admission is free. Hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Florida CraftArt is a nonprofit organization founded in 1951 and headquartered in St. Petersburg. Its mission is to grow the statewide creative economy by engaging the community and advancing Florida’s fine craft artists and their work. Fine craft art is presented in its 2,500-square-foot retail gallery and curated exhibitions are featured in its adjacent exhibition gallery. Florida CraftArt is the *only* statewide organization offering artists a platform to show and sell their work.