

Press Release

***Piñatas – The High Art of Celebration Opens at Mingei International Museum October 28, 2022
A groundbreaking show with more than 80 works by Latinx artists and makers from across the U.S.***

August 25, 2022, SAN DIEGO, CA – On October 28, 2022, Mingei International Museum opens [PIÑATAS: THE HIGH ART OF CELEBRATION](#), one of the first-ever exhibitions to spotlight piñatas as a traditional craft and vibrant contemporary art form. This groundbreaking show includes more than 80 works made by Latinx artists and makers from across the U.S. Work by traditional piñateros will be featured alongside the creations of artists who reinvent and reinterpret the piñata to form a burgeoning, expressive medium.

This exhibition is guest curated by Emily Zaiden, Curator of the Craft in America Center, and is a reimaging of an exhibition featured at the Craft in America gallery in 2021. Zaiden shares, “The contemporary artists featured in this exhibition reconsider the techniques, materials, function, tradition and notion of the piñata, forming a new language of imagined possibilities”.

This exhibition will explore how piñatas are designed, constructed and executed, along with the role they play in modern material culture and in artistic practices. Piñatas of all shapes and sizes will be on view reflecting culture, politics, identity and daily life. Made with humor, biting wit, skilled craftsmanship and innovation this is a vital and constantly evolving field for artmaking.

The works in this show amplify the materiality and performative aspects of piñatas to address the displacement and mistreatment of Latinx communities across the U.S. For example, local bi-national San Diego/Tijuana artist Diana Benavidez’s series, *Vehiculos Transfronterizos*, is a group of remote control piñata cars created as a form of political resistance. Many of the artworks are not intended to be smashed, but rather, presented as ephemeral sculptures.

“This exhibition expands our understanding of piñatas and art,” says Jessica Hanson York, Mingei International Museum Executive Director & CEO. “The works in *PIÑATAS* address current events and political issues with meticulous craftsmanship and creative design, a concept at the core of Mingei’s mission.”

Widespread and beloved across cultures, piñatas are a deeply rooted Mexican tradition with global origins. By nature, piñatas are useful, accessible and made from relatively humble materials. They are shapeshifters created to take any form—creature, figure or idea. Through piñatas, this exhibition spotlights those creatively generating these objects in response to our shifting world offering expansive views of what art can be.

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Participating Artists

Diana Benavidez, Roberto Benavidez, Sita Bhaumik (Estamos Contra el Muro), Mari Carson, Amorette Crespo, Justin Favela, Lisbeth Palacios, Francisco Palomares, Yesenia Prieto, Josue Ramirez, Lorena Robletto, Isaias Rodriguez, Ana Serrano, Giovanni Valderas, Pinata Design Studio, and Piñata District

Exhibition Programming

PIÑATAS: THE HIGH ART OF CELEBRATION will also be accompanied by programming such as lectures by artists featured in the exhibition – with two lectures being in Spanish only – and piñata-making workshops. More details about these events will be shared in September.

Download exhibition images [HERE](#).

ABOUT MINGEI INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM

Located in San Diego's Balboa Park, Mingei International Museum collects, preserves and exhibits folk art, craft and design from all eras and cultures of the world. Within a newly reopened facility that includes an education center, theater, shop, restaurant and plenty of free, accessible public space, the Museum offers inspiring exhibitions and diverse community and educational programs to more than 100,000 visitors a year. As the presenter of [San Diego Design Week](#) and a partner to over 50 local artists and art and cultural organizations, Mingei puts celebrating creativity at the core of its mission through workshops, film festivals, lectures and more. Mingei is a nonprofit institution funded by admission, individuals, and institutional support.

mingei.org

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