

## Press Release

### ***Piñatas – The High Art of Celebration Opens at Mingei International Museum October 28, 2022***

*One of the first-ever exhibitions to spotlight piñatas as a traditional craft and vibrant contemporary art form.*

**October 21, 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 reimagining of an exhibition featured at the Craft in America gallery in 2021.

#### **Exhibition Details**

Works in 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. The exhibition features work from fourteen artists as well as collaborative works between the artists and their communities and studios. A selection of artists in the show are listed below.

Artist **Justin Favela** is known internationally for his large-scale installations and sculptures expressing his interactions with American pop culture and the Latinx experience. Favela is creating a lifesize piñata car inspired by San Diego lowrider legends specifically for the museum and this exhibition.

Third-generation piñata maker and founder of La Piñata Design Studio in Los Angeles, **Yesenia Prieto** seeks to elevate appreciation for the creativity and artistry of piñatas by making them contemporary, grand-scale, and elaborate. Inspired by her family's work, Prieto's studio is reinventing traditional piñata making through their custom piñatas, sculptures, masks and installations.

**Diana Benavidez**, a local binational artist, explores piñata-making as a method of expression and storytelling. Her piñatas reflect her experiences growing up along the San Diego/Tijuana border, as well as her identity and culture. She views piñatas as a medium of resistance and taps their humorous potential to convey powerful critiques of governmental and institutional policies and to address women's issues and the mistreatment of Latinx communities across the U.S.

Exploring the beauty of the mundane and ordinary, piñata-artist and painter **Francisco Palomares** takes his piñatas out of context to make them worthy of a more thoughtful look. He frequently depicts piñatas in his painting playing on art historical narratives and present-day social challenges.

#### **Quotes**

Guest curator **Emily Zaiden** from the **Craft in America Center** shares, "The contemporary artists featured in this exhibition reconsider the techniques, materials, function, tradition, and notion of the piñata, forming a

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new language of imagined possibilities.”

“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.”

### 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, Isaías Rodríguez, Ana Serrano, Giovanni Valderas, Piñata Design Studio and Piñata District

### Exhibition Programming

#### *Artist-led Gallery Talks*

- Thursday, November 10 | 6-7pm - Isaías Rodríguez
- Thursday, January 12 | 6-7pm - Roberto Benavidez
- Thursday, February 9 | 6-7pm - Diana Benavidez
- Thursday, March 9 | 6-7pm - Justin Favela
- Thursday, April 9 | 6-7pm - Yesenia Prieto

#### *Workshops & Art-Making Activities*

- Friday, November 11 | 5:30-8pm  
Piñata-making workshop led by Isaías Rodríguez
- Saturday, January 14, 2023 | 10:30am-1:30pm  
Piñata workshop led by Roberto Benavidez
- Friday, April 14, 2023 | 11am- 2pm  
Commons Level drop-in piñata-making led by Yesenia Prieto

#### *Lecture*

- Friday, March 10, 2023 | 12-1pm  
Art Break talk led by Justin Favela

### Downloads

Download [exhibition images HERE](#).

Download [press release 1 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.

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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.

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