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Carbondale Arts Takes on First Fridays and Prepares for Día de los Muertos

Friday November 3, 2023

Carbondale, CO - October 23, 2023:



In the early 2000s, Carbondale Arts (then Carbondale Council on Arts and Humanities – CCAH), founded First Fridays as a way to highlight the arts in our community and support businesses along Main Street. Over the past several years this event gained a great reputation and respective audience under the administration of the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce.

“The Carbondale Chamber’s First Friday Committee is proud of 10+ successful years of growth for First Friday, but now is a perfect time

for us to pass the baton as we expand new member-driven Chamber programming to support our small business community and broader economic development in Carbondale. The Chamber will continue to be a proud partner with the Carbondale Creative District on various First Friday initiatives.” – *Andrea Stewart, President + CEO, Carbondale Chamber + Tourism*

“Carbondale Arts is excited to once again be the steward of this community institution through the Carbondale Creative District program.” – *Jamie Abbott, Executive Director, Carbondale Arts*
Both organizations have spent the year in close discussion to create a smooth transition plan and to evaluate ways they can support, strengthen, and/or expand the program as it currently exists. “Carbondale Arts is excited about partnering with the community and Main Street businesses to continue advancing the role of the creative sector in the economic vitality of our historic downtown.” – *Michael Stout, Community Engagement Director, Carbondale Arts*

This upcoming First Friday in November is a special event, celebrating Día de los Muertos, that has been coordinated and run by Carbondale Arts for the past 18 years (with support from the Chamber, Town of Carbondale and several other partners listed below).

Traditionally the holiday takes place November 1-2, which is when an enormous community altar will be constructed on the front patio of The Launchpad. For many years the community was invited to create their own altars in the Round



Room at the Third Street Center – then through a Covid pivot, the larger outdoor altar was created and has remained a hub for collective remembrance and honoring. Community members are encouraged and invited to contribute their mementos starting November 1st; the altar will remain up until November 8. For those who enjoy the former tradition and intimacy of creating their own altars, that offering has returned this year in Chacos Park at 4th and Main Streets. Anyone interested in setting up an altar may do so beginning at noon on Friday November 3, and will need to take the altar down by 10pm that evening. Space is limited — first-come first-served. Several Main Street businesses will also be participating with altars in their spaces.



The largest valley-wide celebration of Día de los Muertos is from 5-9pm on Friday, November 3. Festivities begin at 5pm on the 4th Street plaza with face painting, live performances and other fun activities including a pop-up gallery in the Rosybelles bus, showcasing artwork by local students. The procession begins at the Third Street Center at 6pm, led by the students of Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Folklórico and giant catrina puppets, with 3 performances along the route.

After the procession, the action returns to the 4th Street plaza where continued performances will take place, food trucks will be on site serving up their delicacies, and Mexican hot chocolate along with pan de muerto will be provided. For more details, please visit carbondalearts.com

Community partners for this collaborative event include: [Aspen Santa Fe Ballet Folklórico](#), [SIX Productions](#), [Thunder River Theatre Company](#), [SoL Theatre Company](#), [Carbondale Chamber of Commerce + Tourism](#), [Town of Carbondale](#), [Mezcla Socials Dance](#), [SANA](#), [Aspen Valley Land Trust](#), [Out of the Mud Puppet Theatre](#), [Roaring Fork Youth Orchestra](#), In memory of George Stranahan, [Bay Equity Home Loans](#)

Participating Main Street Businesses: Main Street Gallery, Main Street Liquors, Phat Thai, Poss Architecture, Forum Phi Architecture, Axkawa, Crow and Key, Bonfire, Flowers on Main Street, Kahhak Fine Arts, El Dorado, with more to come

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About **Carbondale Arts** and the **Carbondale Creative District**:

Carbondale Arts builds an inclusive and vibrant community through the arts, supporting Carbondale's identity as a place that fosters creativity, collaboration, innovation, and artistic exploration. Our dedication to this mission has been an essential to the history of Carbondale.

The **Carbondale Creative District** supports and expands the impact of creative industries, artists, and entrepreneurs to advance a thriving Carbondale by increasing visibility, and development opportunities. Carbondale is recognized as a premier creative hub – it's our goal to make sure all of the Roaring Fork Valley has access to creative environments and experiences while preserving and promoting Carbondale's unique cultural heritage.