ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Hunterdon Art Museum Hosts Clinton's 2026 Día de los Muertos event with Mariachis, Mexican dance ensemble and Magician Will Fern

Crowd at the museum patio entertained for hours on Sunday afternoon / Tia B's Street Tacos and kids' crafts part of the celebration



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Town of Clinton, NJ – On Sunday afternoon, November 1st, the Hunterdon Art Museum was proud to present the fourth annual celebration of Mexican traditions and Latin American dance related to the holiday Día de los Muertos – in English, the Day of the Dead, celebrated on October 31, November 1st and 2nd. The event in Clinton has continued on the traditional November 1st main date for the last few years, however with Hunterdon Art Museum's initiative, for the first time it turned into an early afternoon celebration instead of an evening on the patio. This year's event was supported with a premium sponsorship from MG + M law firm.

Tia B's Street Tacos featured a variety of soft-shell tacos made on authentic Mexican soft corn tortillas. They also served up stuffed quesadillas. Meanwhile, the

Hunterdon Art Museum volunteers were selling sugar skull cookies, Mexican Coca Cola (made with cane sugar, and served in glass bottles), popcorn, and other snacks along with custom skull bracelets and temporary Day of the Dead tattoos.

Vania and Will Fern, a couple from Flemington, have established themselves as the premier 'señora y señor' entertainers at the annual Clinton Día de los Muertos festivities. Leading her Flemington-based traditional dancers – the LatAm dance group. Mrs. Fern is also a well-known chef and makes the tres leches and flan that is sold at local Mexican restaurants, including Los Tres Hermanos Taqueria at 27 Leigh Street in Clinton, and Mi Sabor at 21 Central Station in Flemington. Her homemade brand of the traditional desserts is called “Vania La Mexicana.”

The LatAm dance group performed many classic Mexican canciones (songs) including La Llorona – “The weeping woman” – and upbeat hits that drew in audience participation. One of the most prominent Hunterdon County couples to hit the HAM patio and dance on Sunday were Clinton Township residents Faith and Carlo Truppi, entrepreneurs behind the Va Fa Napoli wood fired pizza company with their son Giancarlo.

Vania's husband, magician Will Fern, entertained the audiences before the Mariachis took center stage – he even invited two local officials, Clinton Town Councilman Ross Traphagen and Readington Township Deputy Mayor Vinny Panico, to be his helpers early on in the program. Later, Mr. Fern had an audience of a few dozen kids with parents and grandparents in awe, as after the LatAm dancers he was the featured entertainer. Fern invited several attendees up to perform some magic tricks with him, as the act ranged from the use of playing cards and small ropes to coins magically appearing in a bucket.

The Hunterdon Art Museum put posts on social media explaining that the Day of the Dead is traditionally a joyous occasion, “where the lives of the departed are celebrated with food, music and festivity.” Many Clinton residents were able to experience and enjoy a rich cultural event, and HAM succeeded in achieving in its November 1st mission: "celebrating not only the lives of those who have passed but also the vibrant and enduring spirit of Mexican art and tradition," as the museum noted.

Scroll through the photo gallery, and for plenty of Sunday's videos – including dancers and Mariachi performances at the 2026 Día de los Muertos in Clinton – check out the editor's YouTube channel.

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Editor's Note: Clinton Town Councilman Ross Traphagen, who is mentioned in this story and in a few of the event photos, is the advertising & marketing representative for TAPinto North Hunterdon. Councilman Traphagen did not provide any input into the editorial content of this story.