

BOB BAKER MARIONETTE THEATER PRESENTS

FIESTA!

**A 1960'S CLASSIC PUPPET SHOW
REVIVED AND REIMAGINED**

THIS PROJECT IS SUPPORTED IN PART BY THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

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The Art of ¡FIESTA!

Welcome! Bob Baker created ¡Fiesta! back in 1966 as a “love letter to Latin America,” taking inspiration from his neighbors, as well as from his majority Latin American team of puppeteers in Los Angeles. Over the past two years, the Bob Baker Marionette Theater creative team has been working with a variety of artists, performers, costumers, and community members to revise a selection of content from this show– content that included harmful representations of culture and inaccurate stereotypes.

The re-imagining of ¡Fiesta! in 2022, was led by Co-Directors Daisy Hernandez and Karina De La Cruz. ¡Fiesta! introduces brand new artwork, characters, music, and costumes to our beloved marionette musical classic. This show reflects a variety of voices, cultures, and traditions in order to revitalize ¡Fiesta! for a new generation.

Our decision to update ¡Fiesta! comes from our mission of continuing the “rejuvenation” of puppetry arts as our understandings of performance and representation continue to change. Our Theater is committed to equitable, fair, and self-authored cultural representation. Many characters in the 1966 version of ¡Fiesta! were rooted in harmful and offensive stereotypes across race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

As part of this process, we are reprioritizing our goals and approaches. We strive to create a show that makes everyone feel welcome, and accurately reflects the Latin American culture we want to celebrate. We are proud to work with ReadySet, a diversity, equity, & inclusion centered firm throughout the process of these revisions.

Many of our revisions take place in different parts of our community from our cantina scene based on La Parrilla in East LA to our marimba marionettes based on Xochimilco in Mexico City, and Mariachi Plaza. Another of our revisions includes the introduction of more puppets of color to the audience!

You will also enjoy a brand new sequence in our 2023 presentation of ¡Fiesta! which features an array of skeletons inspired by the native botanicals of Mexico and the long tradition of colorful calaveras for Día de Muertos– particularly depictions of La Calavera Catrina by artist José Guadalupe Posada.

We are also proud to announce our collaboration with Mariachi Arcoiris de Los Angeles, the first and only LGBTQ+ mariachi in the world, who helped inform the creation of our updated mariachi marionettes and their rainbow moño.

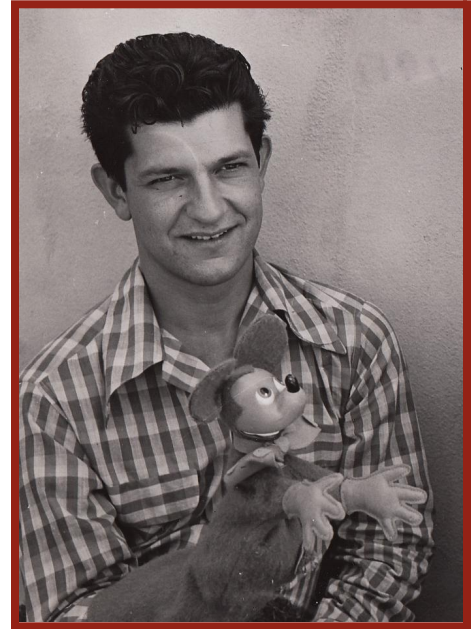
This show also features a teacher friendly curriculum for K-12 learners that highlights the work of Co-Directors Daisy Hernandez and Karina De La Cruz! These lesson plans are centered on [CA Art Standards](#), [The Learning for Justice Anti-Bias Framework Social Justice Standards](#) ([Spanish Translation](#)) and are meant to be adapted to your specific grade level. These lessons are meant to prepare your learners for the show and support them in making deeper connections with the wonderful world of puppetry! This curriculum will engage students in the four artistic processes of visual arts: creating, presenting, responding, and connecting. As well as the four domains of anti-bias education: Identity, Diversity, Justice, and Action.

We hope you enjoy your peek behind the curtain, and we can't wait to see you for the revised and reimagined ¡FIESTA!

Bob Baker

In 1930, Bob Baker saw his first puppet show in his native Los Angeles and shortly thereafter established his own “Petit Theatre” in the backyard of his home on New Hampshire Avenue. By **age eight**, Bob had trained with several different Los Angeles-based companies before giving his first professional performance for legendary Hollywood director Mervyn Leroy.

While attending Hollywood High School, Bob began manufacturing toy marionettes that sold both in Europe and the United States. Following graduation, he began an apprenticeship at George Pal Animation Studios that resulted in a promotion to head animator of Puppertoons, a landmark studio that produced animated stop-motion puppet films.



After World War II, Bob served as an animation advisor at many film studios. His company’s work spanned decades of creative projects across Los Angeles and the world, from puppetry and design on Disneyland’s Main Street to countless contributions in television including *Bewitched*, *Star Trek*, *Land of the Giants* and *NCIS*, and on film in *Bluebeard*, *A Star Is Born*, *G.I. Blues*, Disney’s *Bedknobs and Broomsticks* and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*.



Bob was a tireless advocate for continuation of the puppet arts, providing mentorship and instruction for generations of puppeteers and was instrumental in championing union membership for puppeteers. As a result of his efforts, the Screen Actors Guild - American Federation of Television and Radio Artists now recognizes puppeteers as actors with a special skill.

In 1963, Bob and partner Alton Wood transformed a run-down scenic shop near downtown Los Angeles into a family entertainment institution: The Bob Baker Marionette Theater. Since named an official Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument in 2009, the Theater has served over ONE MILLION children with original shows ranging from Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker* to a musical journey through the history of Los Angeles.

When Bob passed away in 2014 at the age of 90, rather than allow the Theater to disappear, the next generation of puppeteers and supporters banded together to keep the show alive and continue the Bob Baker legacy. In 2018, 55 years after the original grand opening, the final curtain fell on the Theater's historic location. However, imagination continues to dwell at a new location in Highland Park: a 10,000 square foot former Vaudeville Theater that now provides a permanent home to the legacy of Bob Baker, an American pioneer in the art of puppetry.



On Fiesta by Co-Directors Daisy Hernandez and Karina De La Cruz

Beginning this project, us co-directors were trying to find a new way to stitch a motif for the narrative of the show. Bob Baker was a fan of cabaret theater as well as variety acts, as seen throughout the institution's show log, but we wanted to incorporate more significant feelings for this show. Knowing that Bob wanted to celebrate the community around him, as well as the Latine creatives and staff that helped him accomplish his dream, our goal was to design the show as a giant celebration of Hispanic/Latine culture. An addition we hoped for the show is to include more references about the culture specific to Los Angeles, and since Daisy and I were raised by the community (seeing shows consistently as little girls), most of our research became reflections of the visuals around our community, specifically reflecting about what fiestas looked AND felt like.

Fiesta is a representation of our childhood.



¡Fiesta!

CA Art Standard

Responding— Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work

Social Justice Standards

Identity I know about my family history and culture and how I am connected to the collective history and culture of other people in my identity groups.

Diversity I want to know about other people and how our lives and experiences are the same and different.

Enduring Understanding

7.1 Individual aesthetic and empathetic awareness developed through engagement with art can lead to understanding and appreciation of self, others, the natural world, and constructed environments.

Essential Question

- How do life experiences influence the way you relate to art?
- How does learning about art impact how we perceive the world?
- What can we learn from our responses to art?

Objectives

Activities will help students:

- Describe and analyze an artwork using the Elements of Art.
- Derive meaning from an artwork based on personal history and culture.
- Learn about the histories and cultures of their classmates.

Materials

- [Tabla Llana](#)
- [Elements of Art](#)
- [See, Think, Wonder Graphic Organizer](#)

Resources

[Carmen Lomas Garza \(SAAM\)](#)
[See, Think, Wonder \(Project Zero\)](#)
[Elements of Art \(Art of Ed\)](#)

Vocabulary

- **Fiesta** (fi·es·ta) - a type of party or celebration

Procedure

- 1) What is a Fiesta? Have students reflect on their family history or culture and respond to the question independently or collectively. Have students share their response with a partner or group before sharing with the class.
- 2) On a piece of parchment paper or board write Fiesta and begin to generate a list of examples based on your students' experiences around the word. As students share, have them explain who or what they were celebrating and why. Highlight the ways in which our celebrations are different or similar.
- 3) Ask students what they notice from the class generated list and connect their example to the provided definition of Fiesta.
- 4) Introduce students to [Tabla Llena](#) by artist Carmen Lomas Garza, project or provide students with a copy of the artwork.
- 5) Give students time to observe the image. Let students know they are going to begin by describing exactly what they see. Have students review the [Elements of Art](#). In the second step students will describe what they think about what they're seeing. Follow-up questions like, "What else is going on here?" or "What do you see that makes you say that?" can help move students away from giving unsupported opinions by encouraging them to use evidence to explain their thoughts. In the third step, help students articulate what they are wondering by asking them what questions remain for them. As you are moving through each section, write what students observe or have them respond on their [See, Think, Wonder Graphic Organizer](#).

Applying What You Learned

Have students interview a family or community member about a Fiesta or celebration they have taken part in. Remind students that our families do not always need to be direct relatives and that they can also be chosen!

Extension Activity

Honoring our culture and history is important. We live in reciprocity when we are able to sustain each other's lived experience. Have students create an artwork that honors the Fiesta they or their interviewee have shared in the style of a Lotería card.

ELL Extension

To help us practice our vocabulary, have students create an index card that has the word Fiesta and the definition. Students can create a small image to help them remember what the word means. If students have a notebook, have students copy the definition.

Calaveras y José Guadalupe Posada

CA Art Standard

Responding— Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and Analyze Artistic Work

Social Justice Standards

Diversity Students will respectfully express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others and will exchange ideas and beliefs in an open-minded way.

Enduring Understanding

7.2 Enduring Understanding Visual imagery influences understanding of and responses to the world.

Essential Question

- What is an image?
- Where and how do we encounter images in our world?
- How do images influence our views of the world?

Objectives

Activities will help students:

- Describe and analyze the differences and similarities of an artwork using the Principles of Design.
- Make personal connections to art and establish an atmosphere of trust and care.
- Express curiosity about the history and lived experiences of others.

Materials

- [José Guadalupe Posada](#)
- [Calavera Bob](#)
- [Principles of Design](#)
- [Compare and Contrast](#)

Resources

[Jose Posada \(Posada Art Foundation\)](#)
[Breathing Life into the Day of the Dead \(Library of Congress\)](#)
[Bob Baker \(BBMT\)](#)
[See Think Wonder Connect x2 \(Project Zero\)](#)
[Principles of Design \(Art of Ed\)](#)

Vocabulary

- **Calavera** (ka·luh·veh·ruh) - skull

Procedure

- 1) Show your students one of the two artworks by [José Guadalupe Posada](#). Ask them what they believe the artwork to be about. After your short discussion, share the definition of the word calavera with your students. To support students in their comfort with saying calavera, have your students practice pronunciation as a class.
- 2) Facilitate the [See, Think, Me, We](#) strategy with your class. Remember to encourage your students to look closely at the artwork, to share their thoughts, and invite them to make personal connections.
- 3) Refer back to the calavera definition and provide your learners with the history of José Guadalupe Posada and Dia de Muertos.
- 4) Share Calavera Bob. Have students [Compare and Contrast](#) both artworks using the [Principles of Design](#).
- 5) Closing discussion: Dia De Muertos is a time to honor our antepasados, *our ancestors*. How do the marionettes of The Bob Baker Theatre honor this tradition?

Applying What You Learned

Create an artwork based on the calaveras of José Guadalupe Posada. What kinds of activities would calaveras be doing today? Ex: playing video games, listening to their airpods, protesting. What might calaveras be wearing today? Ex: ProClub, Forces, Jordans. What does their environment look like? Ex: your neighborhood, school, or room!

ELL Extension

Have students create an index card that has the definition of the Elements of Art and Principles of Design. Students can create a small image to help them remember what the word means. If students have a notebook, have students copy the definition.

Plantita Medicine and Printmaking

CA Art Standard

Creating—Anchor Standard 2: Organize and Develop Artistic Ideas and Work.

Social Justice Standards

Justice Students will identify figures, groups, events and a variety of strategies and philosophies relevant to the history of social justice around the world.

Enduring Understanding

2.3 Enduring Understanding People create and interact with objects, places, and design, and this defines, shapes, enhances, and empowers their lives.

Essential Question

- How do objects, places, and design shape lives and communities?
- How do artists and designers determine goals for designing or redesigning objects, places, or systems?
- How do artists and designers create works of art or design that communicate effectively?

Objective

Activities will help students:

- Identify Indigenous philosophies.
- Create a print that represents natural and constructed environments.

Materials

[Plantita Templates](#)

Printing Foam
Pencil
Paper
Printing Ink
Brayer

Resources

[Flora \(BBMT\)](#)

Vocabulary

Agave (ah-GAH-vay) - is a succulent indigenous to Central and South America.

Cempazuchitl (sem-pa-soo-cheel)- is the Nahuatl term for the marigold, and translates to "twenty flower".

Printmaking (print·mak·ing) - an artistic process that is able to produce art in large quantities.

Procedure

- 1) Present students with [Flora](#) photo from ¡Fiesta!
- 2) In many Indigenous communities the relationships to plants are sacred. Plants are carriers of wisdom and medicine. Think about what is present in your environment. *What plants do you see? Or what plants would you like to see more of? How can we preserve and take care of our natural environment? How can we transfer the wisdom of our past into our present and future.*
- 3) Distribute [Plantita Templates](#). Review the medicinal properties of **Agave** and **Cempazuchitl**. Practice pronouncing both words as class.
- 4) Introduce the vocabulary word **Printmaking** to your learners. Inform them of the important role this artform has played in social justice movements and how this medium was used to share important messages to the community. Present students with the materials they will be using and ask them the initial question. *How can we transfer the wisdom of our past into our present and future.*
- 5) Have students share their responses. Notice and highlight any changes to their response!
- 6) Using a pencil have students trace the plantita templates of agave and cempazuchitl onto their printing foam. Invite students to do their own plant study and create their own drawing.
- 7) Using a brayer and printing ink, roll pigment onto the surface of the printing foam.
- 8) Place a paper on top of the printing foam and place pressure across the surface to transfer pigment onto the paper. Remove the paper to uncover your print! Encourage students to make as many copies of their plantita as they can.
- 9) Once students have created multiple prints, invite them to play with how they

apply the ink onto the surface or have them add designs around their image.

10) When their artworks are dry, begin to consider where in their communities they can be placed. These can be placed near nature or in a location where nature is absent.

Applying What You Learned

Have students research a plant of their own or a California native plant. Learn about the medicinal properties and create flyers to post at school or in your neighborhood that teach us about your selected plant. Place these flyers near your selected plant for your community members!

ELL Extension

Have students write a short summary of what they learned using key vocabulary (agave, cempazuchitl, and printmaking).

A Lifetime Experience

CA Art Standard

Creating—Anchor Standard 1: Generate and Conceptualize Artistic Ideas and Work

Social Justice Standards

Justice Students will analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today.

Action Students will recognize their own responsibility to stand up to exclusion, prejudice and injustice.

Enduring Understanding

1.1 Enduring Understanding Creativity and innovative thinking are essential life skills that can be developed.

Essential Question

- What conditions, attitudes, and behaviors support creativity and innovative thinking?
- What factors prevent or encourage people to take creative risks?
- How does collaboration expand the creative process?

Objective

Activities will help students:

- Analyze the harmful impact of bias and injustice on the world, historically and today.
- Engage a range of anti-bias, multicultural and social justice issues.
- Generate creative solutions to an issue impacting their community.
- Engage collaboratively in exploration and imaginative play with art materials.

Materials

- [Story Map](#)
- [Anti-bias Scenarios](#)
- [The Adventures of Bobo video](#)

Resources

[The Bob Baker Marionette Theatre Experience \(BBMT\)](#)

Vocabulary

- **Puppet** (pup·pet) - Anything inanimate made animate
 - Ex. a sock on your hand, a blanket you make dance, anything can be a puppet!

Procedure

- 1) What is a Puppet? Ask students to define the word independently or in groups. Have them share their response with the class.
- 2) Play [The Bob Baker Marionette Theatre Experience \(BBMT\)](#). Ask students the following questions:
 - What did this video make you feel?
 - What message do you think Bob was wanting to communicate?
- 3) As you guide your learners in this discussion use the following to introduce the upcoming activity. *If you could create your own puppet theatre what experience would you want your audience to remember? How would you want your audience to feel? What kind of show would you put on for them? What would the music sound like? What would the sets and puppets look like?*
- 4) As part of the reimagining of ¡Fiesta! we are presenting students with the opportunity to interrogate different scenarios that show what anti-bias attitudes and behavior may look like in the classroom. Provide students with an [Anti-bias Scenario](#) or generate a list of possible scenarios for students to examine.
- 5) Have students create their own puppet show in response to the generated list or provided scenarios using the [Story Map](#). Provide students with time to collaborate and practice.
- 6) Students can create their own puppets to go along with their show! Use the [The Adventures of Bobo video workshop](#) to provide students with guidance on what can be puppet and how they can create their own!
- 7) Once their work is complete, have students present their puppet shows! Remember to invite family and friends!

Applying What You Learned

In groups students will create their own variety show that showcases the identity of

each group member. Have students create an artwork or drawing that summarizes what they learned. Have students organize a puppet show for their school community.

ELL Extension

Write a paragraph using five to eight sentences or a short description of the show you and your classmates created. Practice reading your script out loud as if you were introducing it to an audience.