



Winter 2017

Posada: José Guadalupe Posada and the Mexican Penny Press

Schmucker Art Gallery
Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/artcatalogs>



Part of the [Illustration Commons](#), [Interdisciplinary Arts and Media Commons](#), and the [Printmaking Commons](#)

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

Recommended Citation

Schmucker Art Gallery, "Posada: José Guadalupe Posada and the Mexican Penny Press" (2017).
Schmucker Art Catalogs. 22.
<https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/artcatalogs/22>

This open access art catalog is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.

Posada: José Guadalupe Posada and the Mexican Penny Press

Description

José Guadalupe Posada (1852–1913) was one of Mexico's most influential political printmakers and cartoonists. Posada produced an extensive body of imagery, from illustrations for children's games to sensationalistic news stories. He is best known, however, for his popular and satirical representations of calaveras (skeletons) in lively guises, who have become associated with the Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebrations. Posada's prints shaped generations of Mexican artists including the muralists Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco. This exhibition features a range of prints and print media including calaveras, chapbooks, political prints, devotional images, and representations of natural disasters and popular events. The works for this exhibition are organized by Dickinson College's Trout Gallery and are on loan from David Sellers.

Keywords

José Guadalupe Posada, penny press, Mexico, cartoonist, printmaking, political cartoons, satire

Disciplines

Illustration | Interdisciplinary Arts and Media | Printmaking

Publisher

Schmucker Art Gallery, Gettysburg College

Comments

This tri-fold pamphlet was produced for the exhibit "Posada: José Guadalupe Posada and the Mexican Penny Press," which was displayed in Schmucker Art Gallery from January 31 to March 10, 2017.

**INFLUENTIAL PRINTMAKER AND ILLUSTRATOR
 JOSÉ GUADALUPE POSADA (1852-1913)
 WAS BORN IN AGUASCALIENTES, ZACATECAS, MEXICO.**

Posada produced a variety of images, including illustrations for games, shocking news stories, children's chapbooks, and devotional images. These illustrations appeared in numerous inexpensive penny press publications that were directed to growing middle- and working-class audiences. The most popular illustrations Posada produced were satirical representations of *calaveras* (skeletons). Posada's *calaveras* were printed on broadsides, cheap illustrated handbills, to be distributed during the Day of the Dead celebrations every November.

In 1870, Posada found work in the studio of José Trinidad Pedroza, where he learned a variety of printing techniques and produced many illustrated publications. After two years, Posada and Pedroza moved their business to León de la Aldamas, Guanajuato; Posada stayed for fifteen years, developing his career. Then, in 1888 a flood destroyed the town of León, and Posada decided to move to Mexico City.

In the capital, Porfirio Díaz's long and controversial presidency supported developments in industry, transportation, income and literacy, improvements that benefited publishers and printers. Before joining the workshop and publishing house of Antonio Vanegas Arroyo, Posada worked with a number of other publishers including editor and journalist Ireneo Paz, grandfather of Nobel Prize winning poet Octavio Paz. Posada lived the rest of his life working for Arroyo and with other publishers in Mexico City until his death.



**POSADA: José Guadalupe Posada and
 the Mexican Penny Press**

JANUARY 31 – MARCH 10, 2017

RECEPTION:

February 3, 4:30-6:30 pm

LECTURE BY DIANE MILIOTES, INTERIM CURATOR OF MODERN ART AND DESIGN, SMART MUSEUM OF ART, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO:

February 9, 2017, 5:30-6:30 pm, Bowen Auditorium, Gettysburg College. Reception to Follow in Schmucker Art Gallery, 6:30-7:30 pm

GALLERY TALK BY VANESSA MARTINEZ '19:

February 15, noon-1 pm (light lunch provided)

The works for this exhibition are organized in partnership with The Trout Gallery of Dickinson College and are on loan from David J. Sellers.

Cover

José Guadalupe Posada, *La calavera de los camiones*, 1918, 11 3/8 x 15 7/8 in.

1. José Guadalupe Posada, *La serpentina 29, colección de canciones modernas para 1894* (chapbook cover), n.d., 7 7/8 x 5 7/8 in.

2. José Guadalupe Posada, *El muchacho de la vaquilla cuento* (chapbook cover), n.d., 7 3/4 x 5 7/8 in.

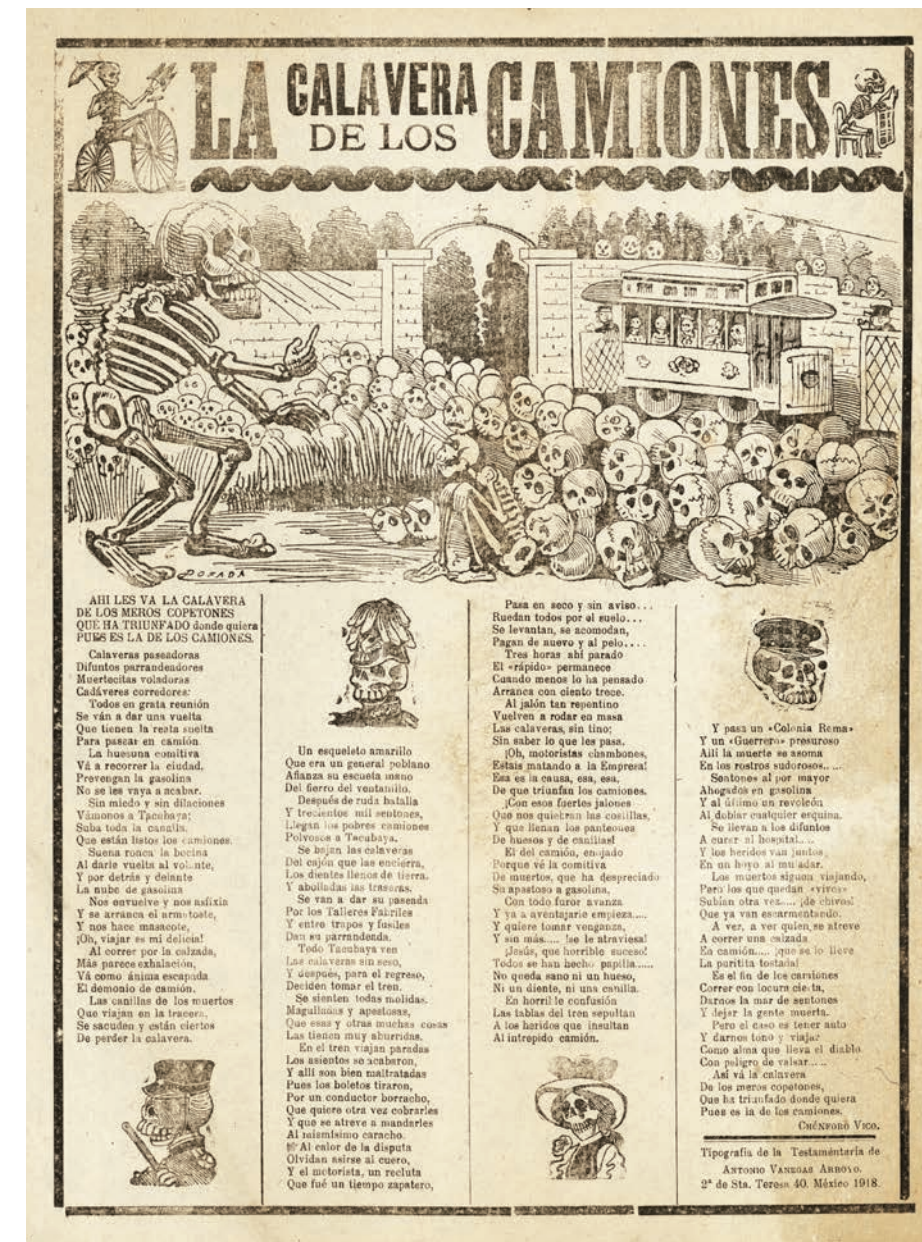
3. José Guadalupe Posada, *¡Calavera Zumbona!*, n.d., 11 1/4 x 15 in.

4. José Guadalupe Posada, *La calavera de los artesanos*, 1913, 11 3/8 x 15 in.

5. José Guadalupe Posada, *La calavera de cupido*, n.d., 11 1/8 x 15 in.

6. José Guadalupe Posada, *Barata de calaveras*, 1907, 11 1/2 x 15 7/8 in.

**POSADA: José Guadalupe Posada and
 the Mexican Penny Press**



Gettysburg
 COLLEGE
 Schmucker Art Gallery

300 North Washington Street
 Schmucker Hall
 Gettysburg, PA 17325-1485

Gettysburg
 COLLEGE
 Schmucker Art Gallery



It is speculated that Posada met illustrator Manuel Manilla (1830-1895) while working at Arroyo's publishing house. By working alongside Manilla, it is thought that Posada may have adapted and developed Manilla's imagery of the *calavera*. Scholars find it difficult to verify the authorship of many prints because of the similarities in style and subject of the two illustrators.

Posada was able to gain a reputation for his remarkably inventive and impactful prints. However, when he died in 1913, Posada was buried in a pauper's grave. It was not until the 1920s that Posada was recognized for his work and his importance in the history of graphic art in Mexico. Artists such as Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, and Jean Charlot championed Posada's work and can be credited for the continued interest in the significance of his contribution to Mexican art and culture.

This exhibition features a selection of the diverse illustrations of José Guadalupe Posada. Although the messages, styles, and techniques of each work differ; overall, the prints, books, and broadsides illustrate a vibrant picture of Mexican culture and society in the early twentieth century.

— Vanessa C. Martinez '19

The works for this exhibition are organized in partnership with The Trout Gallery at Dickinson College and are on loan from David J. Sellers.



Comenzaremos por partes,
 Será con los carpinteros,
 Que se vuelven calaveras
 Por borrachos y embusteros,
 Son de sí, muy tracaeros
 Y enamoran á las gatas
 Volviéndolas animitas,
 Cuando las ven muy borracha
 No se quedan muy atras
 Los picudos de los sastres,
 Que son buenos calaveras
 Y muy buenos zaragates;
 A las gatas hacen guías,
 Se la echan de buenas cachas
 Y son unos petimetros,
 Que viven siempre en Cobacha
 Y sigue de amor la llama,
 Con los maestrillos barberos,
 Que se mantienen con pelos,
 Y quieren ser curanderos;
 Escan muñecas á los perros
 Con navaja y con tijeras,
 Pero á lo mejor del cuento,
 Se quedan de calaveras.

Signen ya los dulceritos,
 Que venden dulces salados,
 Y carcos como no hay más.
 Los neveros pingajosos
 Y horchateras relamidas
 Serán luego calaveras,
 Calaveras corrompidas.

