**Literary Skulls**

*Calaveras Literarias*, or Literary Skulls, are compositions of verse and rhymes, originally from Mexico. These are typically circulated in the days leading up to the Day of the Dead. They are fun, irreverent expressions that usually satirize a well-known person or event by playfully parodying the inevitable death of those involved.

Though they have been around since the colonial era, they were popularized in newspapers in the nineteenth century. Inspired by long and ostentatious epitaphs of nobles, Mexican literary artists used this format to criticize governing officials. Some literary critics believe that friar Joaquin Bolaños’ “La portentosa vida de la muerte” is a precursor to the Literary Skulls of the 1800s. The first Skull to appear in a newspaper was in 1849, in Guadalajara, Jalisco.

**The Latin American and Caribbean Studies Center invites you to participate in our Literary Skull Contest.** Have fun creating humorous rhymes and verses, reference current events, your friends, classes and more; write a political critique or a social commentary. Remember a good Literary Skull is ingenious, ironic, subtle, uses caricatures and has a certain rhyme and rhythm. These can be in English, Spanish or bilingual.

**Send an original Literary Skull (between four lines and two pages) to lacs@stonybrook.edu before November 1st, 2020.** A multidisciplinary jury will choose the best ones, which will be announced and shared on November 2nd. Use this Day of the Dead tradition to be creative and relax. We look forward to reading your Literary Skull.
Here are some examples for inspiration:

La flaca no respeta postura,
de presidentes o ciudadanos.
Los lleva a la sepultura
... como botana de gusanos.

Hoy la Universidad está de luto,
Pues el profe Oscar falleció
De tener alumnos aplicados
Del puro gusto se murió.

Es una verdad sincera,
lo que nos dice esta frase:
quе sólo el ser que no nace
no puede ser calavera.