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Come join José Guadalupe Posada's “Day of the Dead” dance party

Playful skeletons cavort in The Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book (Gran Baile de Calaveras: un Libro Túnel) with a bilingual English-Spanish booklet



CHICAGO: The playful *calaveras*, or skeletons, made popular in Mexican artist José Guadalupe Posada's (1852–1913) etchings and lithographs, dance the fandango, play music, make tortillas, and woo their lovers in this lively tunnel book.

The Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book (Tunnel Vision Books, September

2006, ages 8–12) by Joan Sommers is the latest in the “Take a Peek” series of expandable-format books inspired by Victorian paper toys. Beautifully-printed panels are die-cut in exquisite detail and attached to accordion sides to allow the viewer to literally “open up” the picture. The sturdy board cover serves as a stand so the book can be easily displayed.

The Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book features Posada's animated skeletons, returning to the land of the living dressed in their everyday attire, which have become synonymous with the Day of the Dead, the traditional Mexican holiday celebrated each fall from October 31 to November 2. Included is a 16-page, bilingual English-Spanish booklet on Posada's life, the social significance of his *calaveras*, and Day of the Dead traditions.

Children love to expand *The Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book* and see the comical calaveras come to life. These skeletons incite laughter, not fear. They affirm the Mexican belief that death is a natural part of life. Author Joan Sommers says about *The Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book*, “this is a fun way to introduce English-speaking students learning Spanish, or Spanish-speaking students learning English, to the art of Posada and the Day of the Dead—both important aspects of Mexican culture.”

The Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book is produced to coincide with the exhibition “José Guadalupe Posada and the Mexican Broadside” currently at the Art Institute of Chicago (June 24, 2006–January 17, 2007).

Joan Sommers is a book designer and art teacher who lives in Chicago, IL.

Also part of the “Take a Peek” Tunnel Book series by Joan Sommers:

A Sunday on La Grande Jatte Tunnel Book

The Henri Rousseau Tunnel Book

The Coral Reef Tunnel Book

Book Details:

Title: *The Dancing Skeletons Tunnel Book* (Gran Baile de Calaveras: un Libro Túnel)

Author: Joan Sommers

Translator: Valerie Shull

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Distributed by Independent Publishers Group

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Picture Books/Nonfiction, 16 pages, 6 3/4" x 6 1/4"; 20 line drawings, 4 photographs,

Four-color interior

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