**Contributor: Jessi DiTilio**

**Posada, José Guadalupe**

Born: Aguascalientes, Mexico, 1852; Died: Mexico City, Mexico, 1913.

A seminal printmaker of Mexico City at the turn of the twentieth century, José Guadalupe Posada is most recognizable for his *calaveras*, images of skulls and skeletons that satirized politicians, aristocrats, and corruption in Mexican society. Though he received little acclaim or monetary success during his lifetime, Posada’s work was rediscovered by the Mexican avant-garde in the early 1920s, including Jean Charlot, **Dr. Atl**, **Diego Rivera**, and **José Clemente Orozco**. For these artists, Posada represented an artistic precedent outside of the European tradition, and a link between the images of Pre-Columbian art and their own. The most famous of the *calaveras* is a character Posada called La Catrina, whose image is ubiquitous in pop-cultural imagery produced for the Day of the Dead. A prolific artist with engravings numbering in the thousands, Posada began his career in 1888, when he moved from his hometown to Mexico City. There he worked as an illustrator for Antonio Vanegas Arroyo, a major publisher of the popular penny press, which put out broadsheet newspapers describing everything from political events and crime to local folklore and literature. Posada also witnessed the early years of the Mexican Revolution, and produced the first visual representations of the agrarian leader and revolutionary activist Emiliano Zapata.

**References and Further Reading:**

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