



PARTY FOR LEONORA CARRINGTON THIS FRIDAY AT MAKARA CENTER FOR THE ARTS

DAVID KELSEN | APRIL 4, 2018

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Board the crocodile boat to SanTana for Carrington’s would-be 101st birthday. (Courtesy Makara Center for the Arts.)

We are all invited to a birthday party for artist and writer extraordinaire Leonora Carrington, but an RSVP is required for the free event. Hosted by SanTana’s Makara Center for the Arts, the celebration will have two special guests: the surrealist’s son and grandson. Leonora Carrington’s art and writing can’t get enough celebration as far as I’m concerned.

And there will be cake, emblazoned with one of Carrington’s exquisite images, although it’s not her most famous work, *Inn of the Dawn Horse*, now owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art. A friend sent me a postcard of it sometime in the late ’80s, which I still possess, and another friend snapped a photo of me standing in front of the oil painting when it hung among the thousands of paintings by women that I had only ever seen in books during “In Wonderland: The Surrealist Adventures of Women Artists in Mexico and the United States,” which was at LACMA in 2012.

British-born Leonora Carrington spent most of her life in Mexico City, having fled Hitler’s Europe after her lover Max Ernst was arrested by the Gestapo, eventually escaping to America with the help of Peggy Guggenheim. On the mend from this blow in Madrid, Carrington ran into a Mexican diplomat she had met in Paris. He offered her asylum in his home country, and so they wed, and she went.

Carrington was born into money and was even presented at court, though making art was her one true aim. “I didn’t have time to be anyone’s muse,” she said. “I was too busy rebelling against my family and learning to be an artist.”

My first encounter with the artist was through a short story called “The Debutante.” In it, a young woman bemoans the upcoming ball she must attend to a hyena she often visited at the zoological gardens. The animal volunteers to take her place when he hears about the food. They almost pull off the swap.

Carrington’s life story reads like a surrealist novel itself. So it will be wonderful to hear personal tales at the Makara party from her son, Dr. Harold Gabriel Weisz-Carrington, and grandson, Daniel Weisz, co-founders of the Leonora Carrington Foundation.

“This event came about thanks to one of our library patrons and volunteers,” says Marytza Rubio, founder and executive director of Makara Center for the Arts. “Annabella Pritchard, who hosts Surreal StoryTime, had reached out to the founders of the Leonora Carrington Foundation with an open invitation to visit Makara. Much to our delight, they accepted, and the timing worked out for us to plan this 101st birthday celebration.”

As it so happens, Weisz is nearby pursuing his doctorate in political science at UC Irvine. Dr. Weisz-Carrington holds a Ph.D from the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, an MA in English Literature, and a BA in Theater and Literature. Their talks will be presented in English, but the Q&A to follow can be in Spanish or English.

Makara is first and foremost a library, where lending privileges are free for Santa Ana residents. It also hosts workshops, such as Surreal StoryTime, the free, kid-friendly program focused on women surrealists, where a story reading is paired with an art activity, and special cultural events such as Leonora Carrington 101. See you there.

Leonora Carrington 101 at Makara Center for the Arts, 811 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714)



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