Day of the Dead candelabra
Izucar de Matamoros, Puebla, Mexico
Gift of Alice B. Melvin, in celebration of donor’s father and mother, Professor A. Gordon Melvin and Lorna Strong Melvin, donor’s sister, Mary Melvin Petronella, family friend, Luis Hererra Garcia, friend, Richard Paul Baydin, and donor’s cats, Miss Amiga, Sir Minky, and Pyewacket.
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Object on display at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology in the Encounters With the Americas gallery

Puebla artist Alfonso Castillo Orta (1944–2009) created this colorful Árbole de la Vida (Tree of Life) candelabra, which features Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) skeletal figures, including a Catrina, as well as bird and floral elements. Orta was best known for his elaborate candelabras, which were formed by hand and painted using natural pigments. Today, Orta’s family continues to produce work in the style that he created.

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