



**Benavidez, Max.**

**María de Flor: Una historia del día de los muertos/Maria de Flor: A Day of the Dead Story.**

**illus. by María Elena Castro. U.S. Lectura Books. 2005.  
unpaged. ISBN 0-9716580-5-6. \$15.95.**

**Gr 1-5**—Pina, the young central character, travels to Oaxaca, México in a dream. There, she participates in the Day of the Dead celebration with her extended family. Singing, sharing stories of departed loved ones, and consuming traditional Mexican cuisine, Pina truly makes a connection with her deceased cousin, María de Flor. Her uncle Xavier tells about the things that she liked to do and asks Pina to share a cup of hot chocolate with María de Flor at her grave. The brief story lends itself well to a read-aloud experience with young children, while at the same time providing a complete, enjoyable anecdote. Although the bilingual text gives flexibility to the reader, the simple story line is dominated by the creative illustrative arrangement of María Elena Castro. Castro includes a wide variety of objects on each page's assemblage, including wooden animals, metal designs, and papier-mâché dolls. This is a worthy, culturally relevant addition to any library or bookstore collection.—*Paul M. Kienlen, Northside ISD Bilingual/ESL Dept., San Antonio, TX*