

FRIDA KAHLO

Self-Biographical Painter



Self-Portraits

Surrealist

Naïve Art

Folk Art

Nature

Surrealism is a [cultural movement](#) that started in 1917, and is best known for its [visual artworks](#) and [writings](#). Artists painted unnerving, illogical scenes, sometimes with [photographic precision](#), creating strange creatures from everyday objects, and developing painting techniques that allowed the unconscious to express itself.

Folk art covers all forms of visual art made in the context of [folk culture](#). Folk arts are rooted in and reflective of the cultural life of a community.

Naïve art is usually defined as [visual art](#) that is created by a person who lacks the formal education/training that an artist undergoes (in anatomy, [art history](#), technique, [perspective](#), ways of seeing). Unlike [folk art](#), naïve art does not necessarily derive from a distinct popular cultural context or traditions.

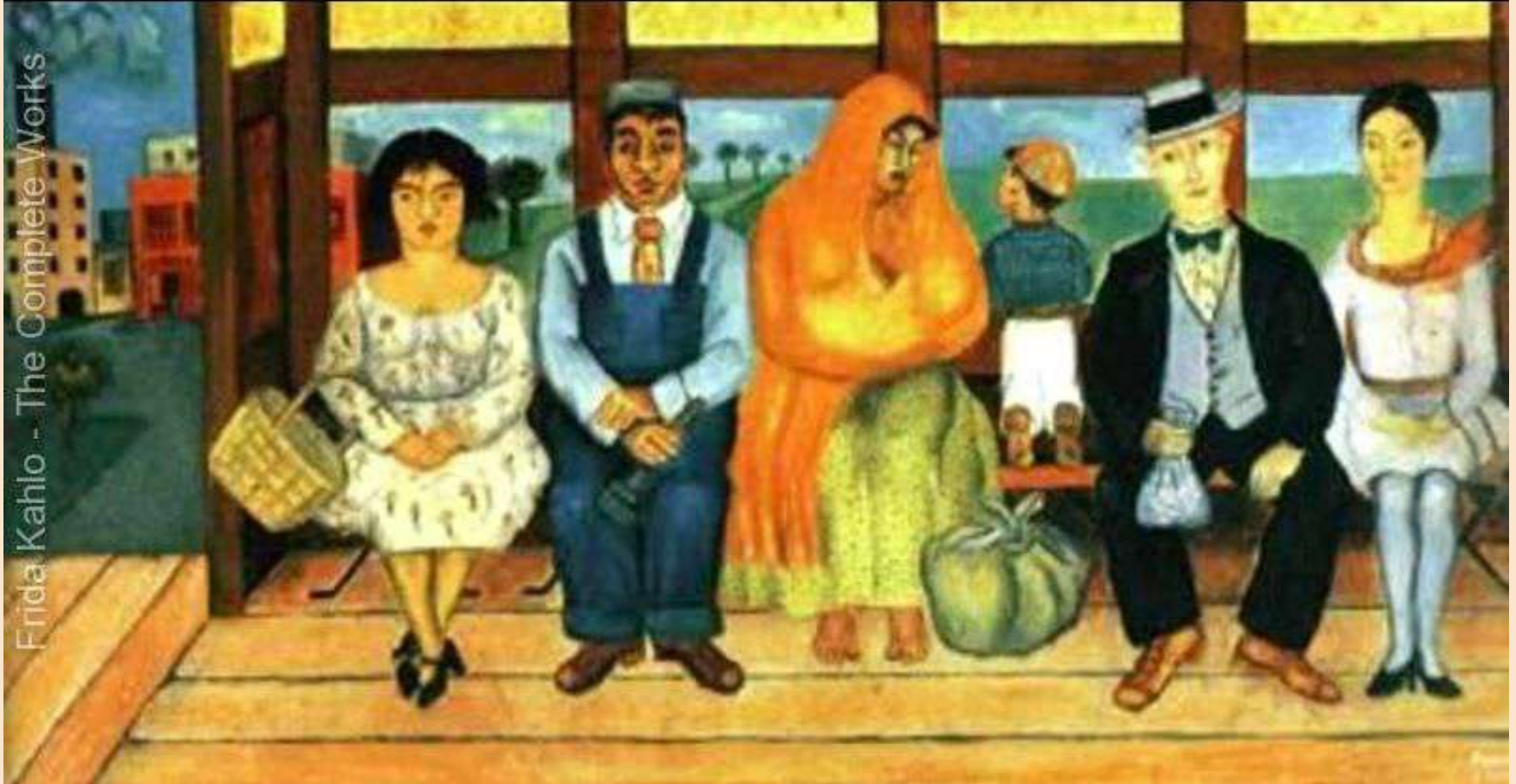
Frida Kahlo was born in Mexico on July 6, 1907. Many tragedies occurred in Frida's life, which led her development as an artist.

She contracted polio at the age of five. As a result the illness caused her left leg to appear much thinner than her right, and it remained that way permanently



On Sept 17th, 1925 at the age of 18, Frida was involved in a serious trolley accident.

courtesy of www.frida-kahlo-foundation.org



The accident left Frida with many broken bones. She had broken bones in her spinal column, collarbone, ribs, and pelvis. Plus, she had 11 fractures in her right leg. Also, her right foot was dislocated and crushed, and her shoulder was out of joint.



Frida spent a month lying on her back. She was encased in a plaster cast and enclosed in a boxlike structure. She began painting to pass the time while healing in bed. It became her lifelong passion.

She went through 32 different operation in attempt to quell some of her lasting pain.

Art helped her cope with this pain, and kept her busy while she was bedridden



In 1929, Frida married
Diego Rivera.



He was a highly
esteemed muralist,
also from Mexico.

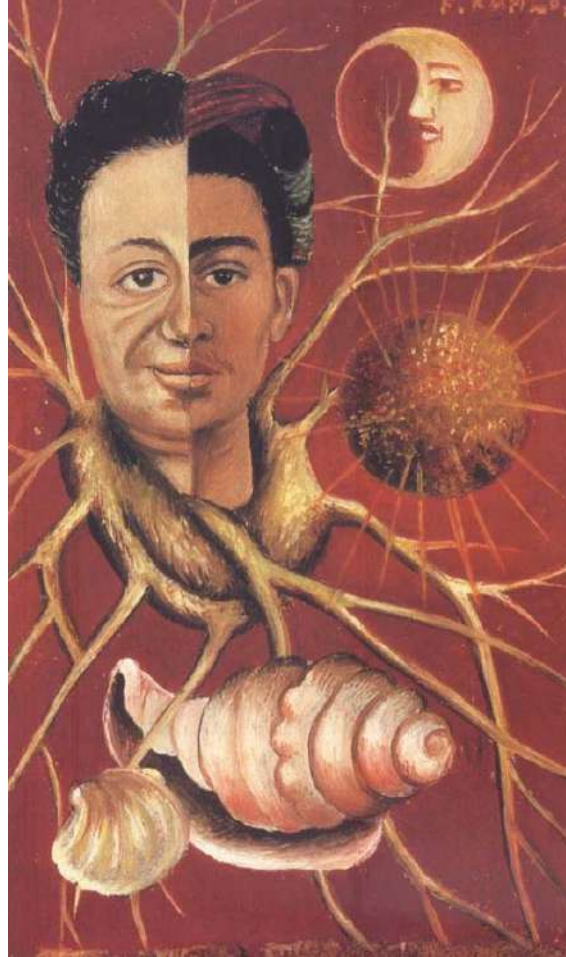


Frida and Diego Rivera (The Wedding Portrait)"
Was painted two years after her wedding to Rivera

Sadly, her marriage was full of infidelity and unhappiness.



But...he did help her find her own artistic style.





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"I paint self portraits
because I am so often alone.
Because, I am the subject I know best."

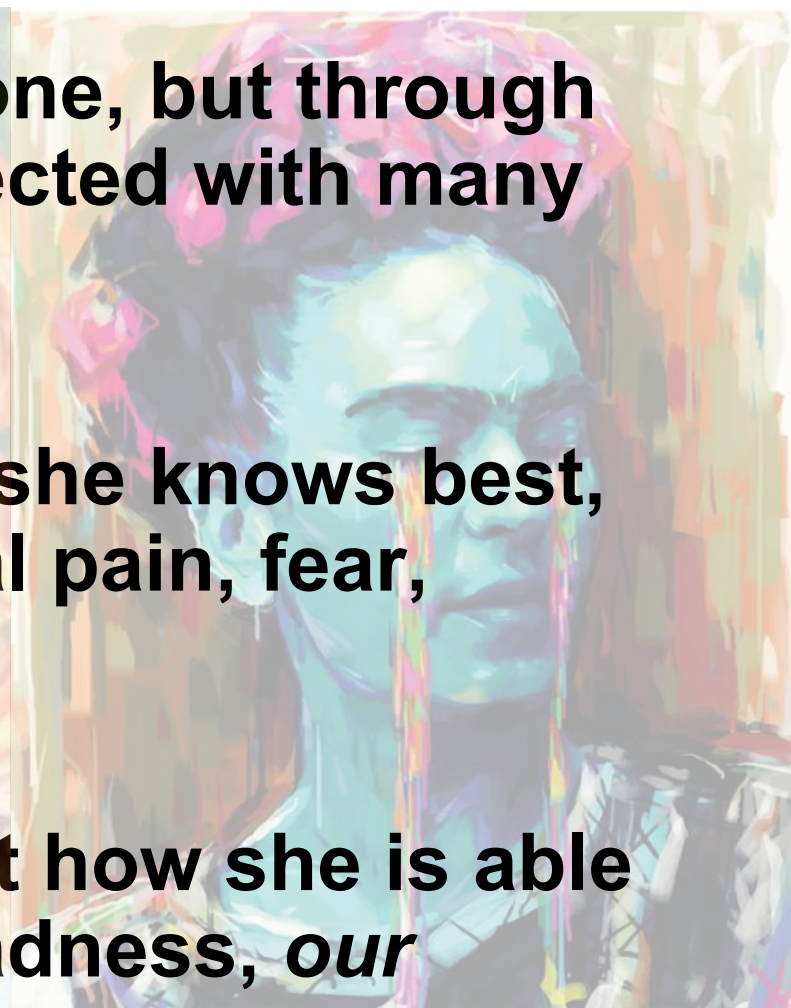


Frida Kahlo may have felt alone, but through her paintings, she has connected with many others.

In painting the subjects that she knows best, she depicts her own personal pain, fear, anguish, loss - and even joy.

The rest of us often marvel at how she is able to depict *our* heartbreak, *our* sadness, *our* loneliness.

It's as if the physical pain that Frida was forced to endure gave her the means to depict her feelings so honestly on canvas.



Many of Frida's paintings represent the pain and suffering afflicted by tragedies that occurred in her life, including her unhappy marriage with Diego.

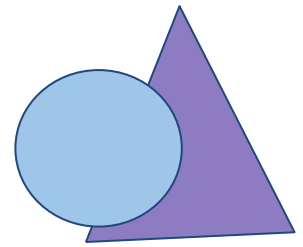


Frida's eccentric art is recognized throughout the world.

She is well known for expressing her feelings on canvas.

Little Deer

Frida Kahlo was from Mexico. This self-portrait was painted while Kahlo and Rivera were visiting the United States of America in 1932.



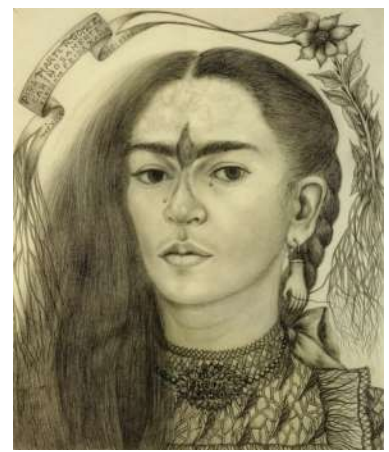
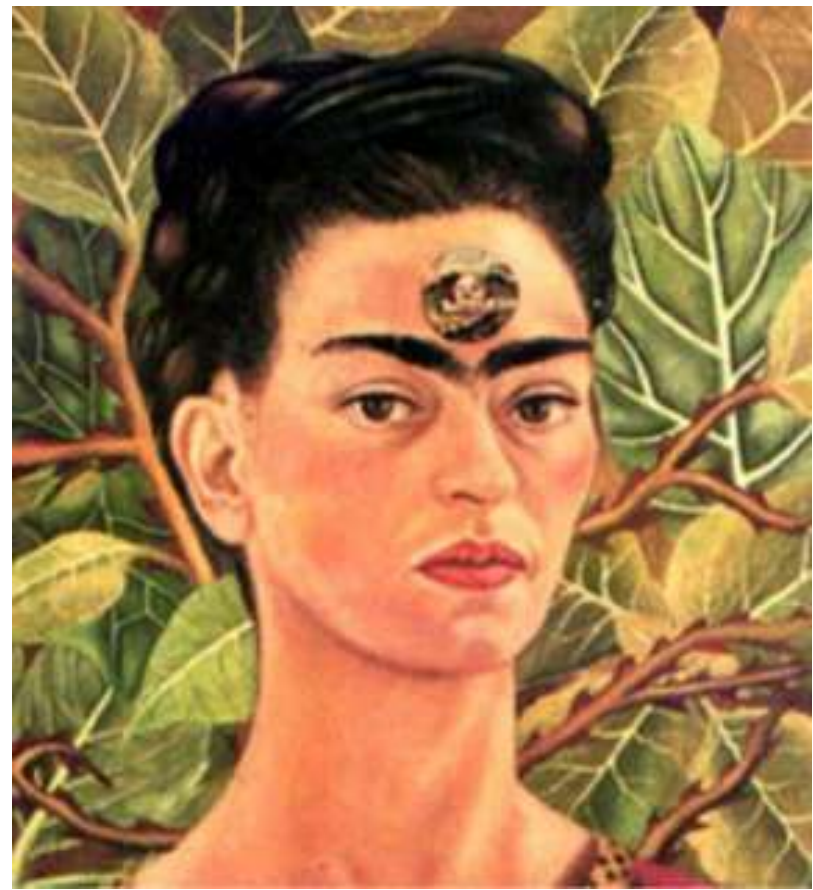
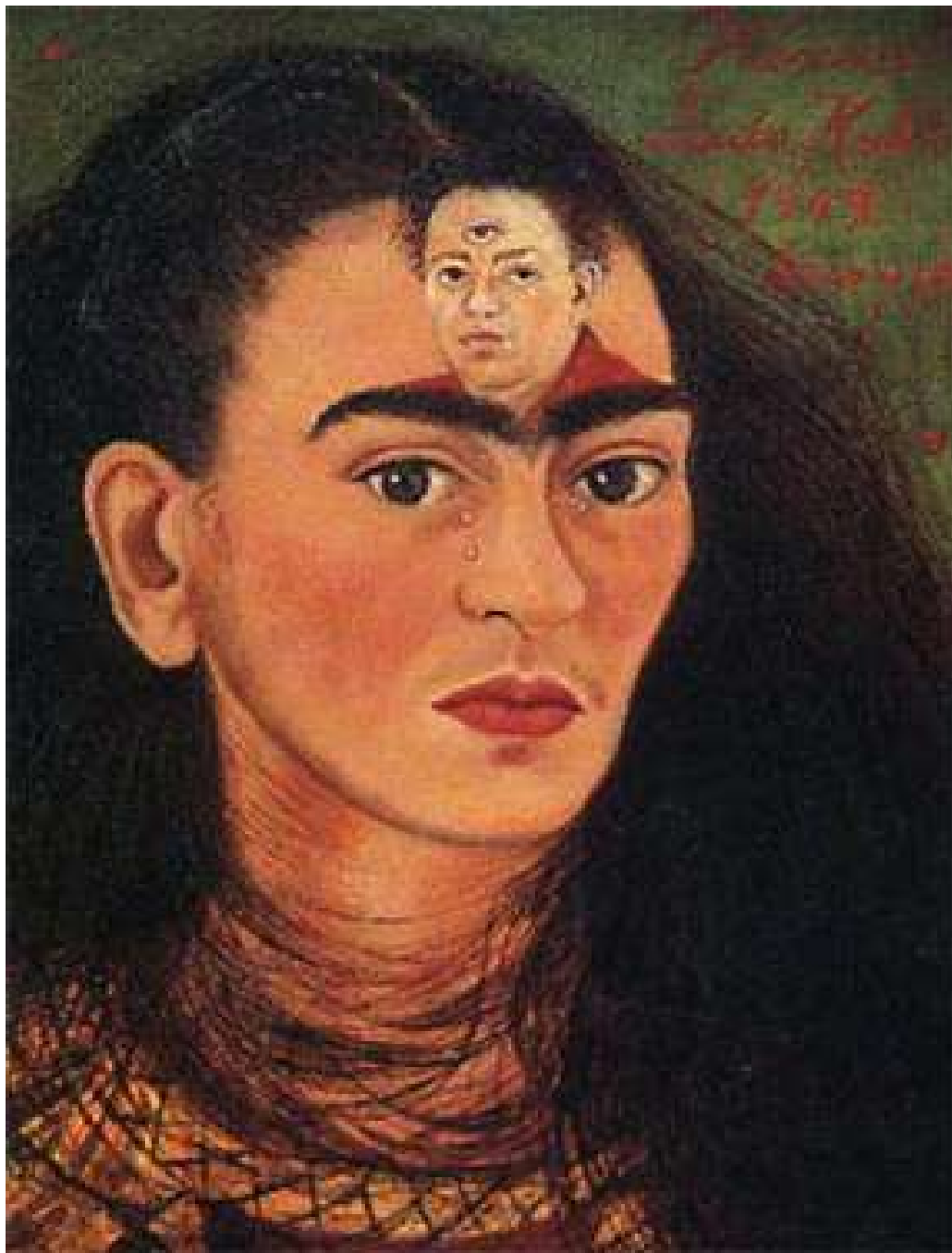
In this self portrait she paints her memories of her homeland.

"Self-Portrait on the Borderline Between Mexico and the United States, 1932."

The marriage of Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo is one of the most famous alliances between artists. It is a well-known fact that they had a passionate and stormy relationship, filled with great love and also betrayals.

They both had incredible talents and vision, but Diego's work would be more public and monumental, whereas Frida's was more personal





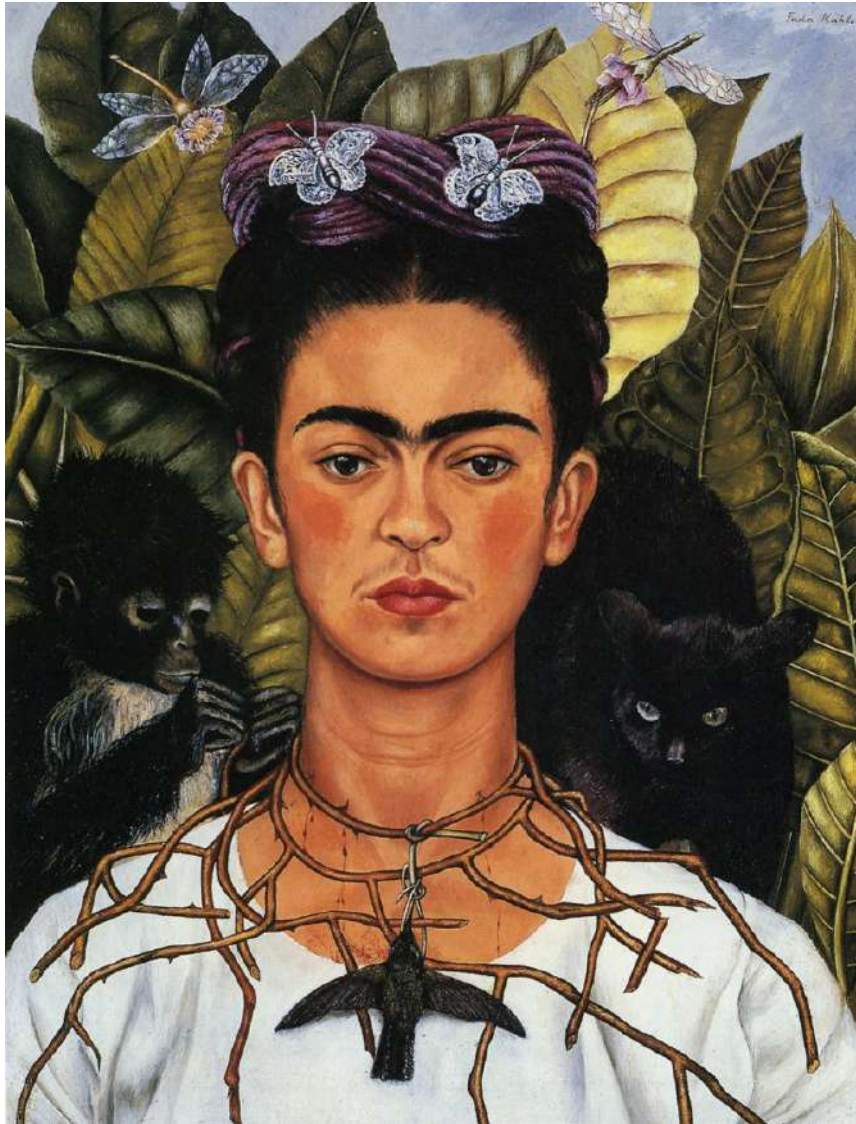
A self portrait can also show others who you are in a unique and different way.



"My Dress Hangs Here"

Self-Portrait with Hummingbird

It was painted after Frida's divorce from Rivera.



Art historians explain the meaning behind some of Frida Kahlo's images used in her painting.

- The hummingbird represents hope
- Kahlo's white frock hints at martyrdom
- The thorn necklace is often a symbol of Jesus's crown of thorns that he wore as he dragged his cross to be crucified.
- The butterflies on Kahlo's head symbols of her own personal resurrection
- This led some historians to believe that Kahlo is comparing herself directly to Jesus Christ.



(*Sun and Life*), Frida Kahlo, 1947

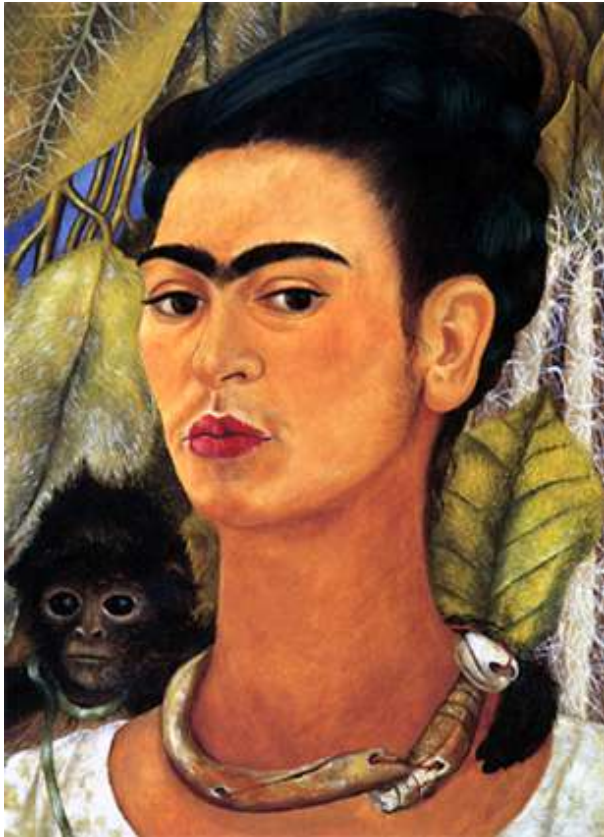


This is
Frida Kahlo
painting
"The Two Fridas"
in her art
studio.

In Frida's Dairy, Kahlo wrote about this painting, "The Two Fridas." She said it originated from her memory of an imaginary childhood friend. Later, she admitted it expressed her desperation and loneliness with the separation from Diego.



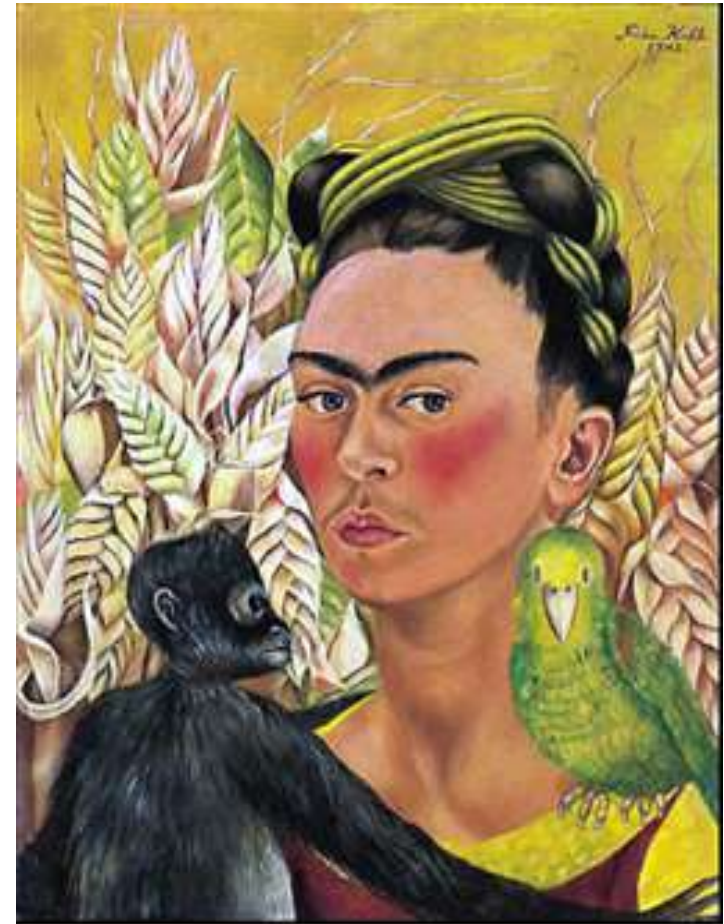
"The Two Fridas"



In Mexican mythology, the monkey usually symbolizes lust. However, in this painting, “Self Portrait with a Monkey”, the monkey depicts a creature with its own soul. The monkey is tender and gentle and put its arm around Frida's neck in a very protective way.

Self Portraits with Monkey

In this portrait and other portraits that were later painted by her, Kahlo used a background with big curtains of leaves. By using this type of background, the subject in the painting appears to be pushed forward closer the viewer. This style is borrowed from Alfredo Ramos Martinez.





A self-portrait is a painting by an artist of him or her self.

The painting tells us something about who the artist is.

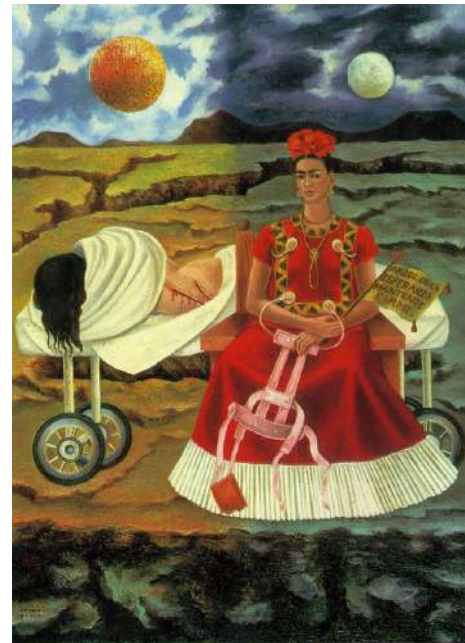
It gives us clues about what is important to the artist.

We can guess what the artist loves by what is in

ROOTS

Frida Kahlo

1951, *Self-Portrait with the Portrait of Doctor Farill*



Self Portrait II

Tree of Hope



How much have
Kahlo's paintings
sold for?

Frida's oil on
panel painting
titled,
*Portrait of
Christina, My
Sister* (1928)
was auctioned at
Sotheby's for
\$1,655,750

The Dream



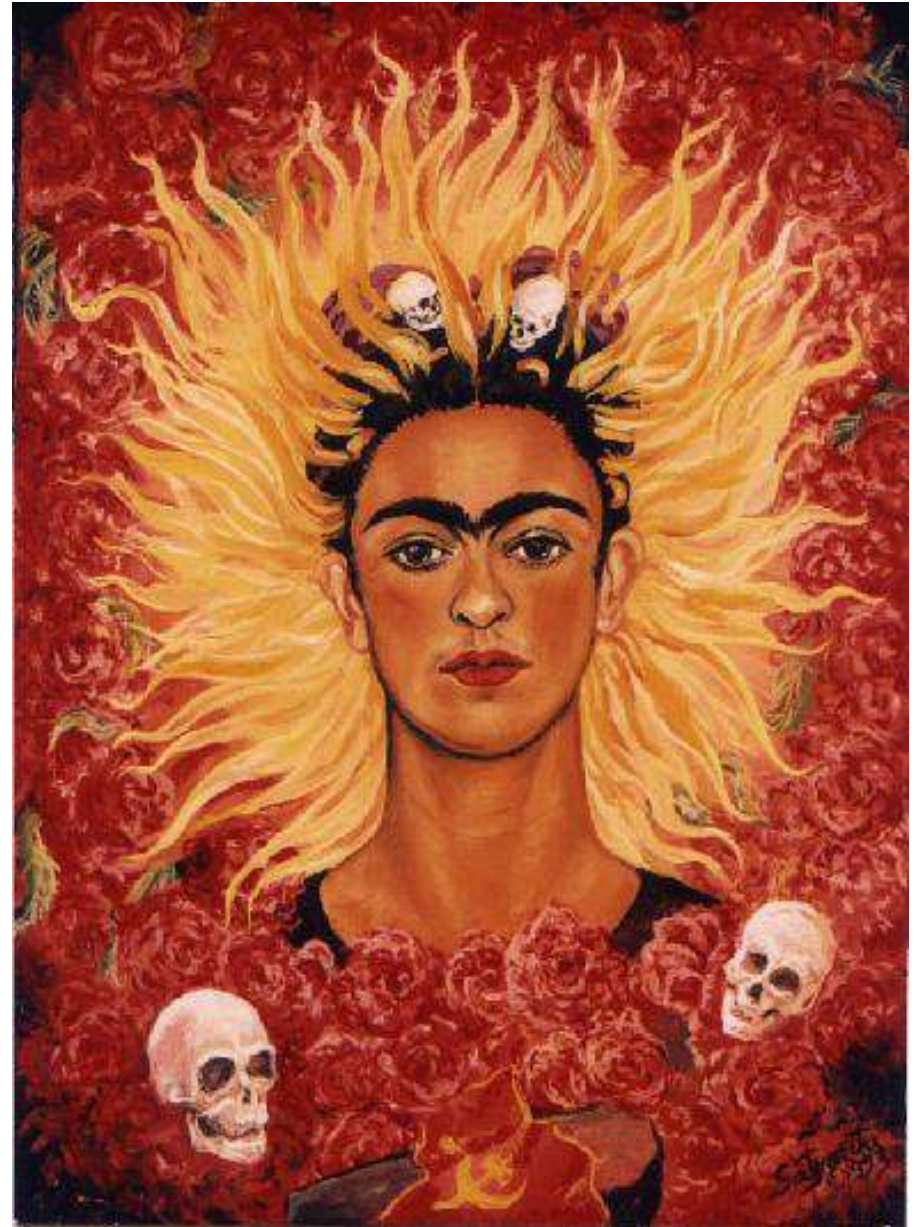
The Legend of Her Cremation

Legend has it when mourners gathered to watch Frida's cremation, a sudden blast of heat from the open incinerator doors blew her body bolt upright.

Her hair was on fire from the flames, and blazed around her head like a halo.

Frida's lips appeared to break into a seductive grin just as the doors closed shut.

Thus, she gave her audience one last



Assignment: Surrealism Self-Portrait

1. In your Portrait Study & Style Packet, you will draw a surrealistic self-portrait *influenced by Frida Kahlo's self-portrait style* using a number two pencil, watercolor, and a mirror or a selfie.
1. You must include eyes, nose, mouth, eyebrows, chin, ears, hair, neck, top of shoulders and any piercings, facial marks (freckles), and/or glasses you have.
1. Play close attention to the proportions and details of your face. (ex: thin top lip full bottom lip, eyes that turn down, a wide bulb of nose, etc.)
1. Background should have additional surrealistic imagery
1. Everything shaded using the Value Scale to show a wide range of values from light to dark.

Frida Kahlo Style

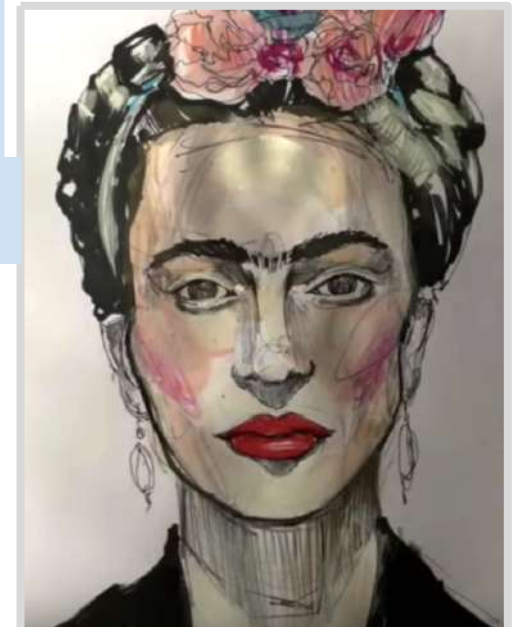


<https://youtu.be/P9bWvs6AXmc>



<https://youtu.be/l4X5oIR0Jkc>

Self-Portrait Videos



<https://youtu.be/6DGOLGOBW0E>