



Frida Kahlo: The Paintings

Hayden Herrera , Joel Avirom (Designed by)

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In small, stunningly rendered self-portraits, Mexican artist Frida Kahlo painted herself cracked open, hemorrhaging during a miscarriage, anesthetized on a hospital gurney, and weeping beside her own extracted heart.

Her works are so incendiary in emotion and subject matter that one art critic suggested the walls of an exhibition be covered with asbestos.

In this beautiful book, art historian Hayden Herrera brings together numerous paintings and sketches by the amazing Mexican artist, documenting each with explanatory text that probes the influences in Kahlo's life and their meaning for her work. Included among the illustrations are more than eighty full-color paintings, as well as dozens of black-and-white pictures and line illustrations. Among the famous and little-known works included in *Frida Kahlo: The Paintings* are *The Two Fridas*, *Self-Portrait as a Tehuana*, *Without Hope*, *The Dream*, *The Little Deer*, *Diego and I*, *Henry Ford Hospital*, *My Birth*, and *My Nurse and I*. Here, too, are documentary photographs of Frida Kahlo and her world that help to illuminate the various stages of her life.

Frida Kahlo: The Paintings Details

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From Reader Review Frida Kahlo: The Paintings for online ebook

Michelle says

Part coffee table book, part art history text, and part biography, this was an in depth look at Frida's paintings. I love Herrera's detailed descriptions of her work situated right next to a painting reproduction. It was fun to see photos of places where we'd been--I absolutely adore the blue house where Frida had her studio.

Tammy Marie Jacintho says

Each time I look at this book, year after year, I feel like I did that first day. I recognize her indomitable spirit—this incredible will, not only to survive but also to look with an unflinching eye. Her art redeems suffering as an ecstatic experience.

And we mentally shake hands. As I turn the pages, I see her leaping over the grave where she refuses to rest.

Simone says

Beautiful reproductions of Kahlo's work here - with a spare but essential back story of her life. There are better biographies, but as an essential background to the works presented, this volume does very well.

Alexandra says

This is no hardcover, unfortunately, but a comprehensive collection of many of Frida's paintings. After watching the movie again the other day, I had to get a book that told me more about this strong character.

Erica says

Indispensable guide to Frida Kahlo's biography and art. While I think Herrera misjudges Kahlo's intentions, especially around gender performance and pregnancy, his research is enlightening and the book is a fascinating read from cover to cover.

Diann Blakely says

Whether or not you saw FRIDA, Julie Taymor's recent biopic about the late Mexican painter Frida Kahlo, reading about the artist's color-saturated world can provide a spectacular antidote to the gray weeks of winter. The best introduction remains Hayden Herrera's learned, thoroughly enjoyable biography Frida, which served as the basis for the film. Herrera's study is particularly valuable in its extensive, down-to-earth

commentary on Kahlo's paintings. To many new viewers, her self-portraits seem determinedly macabre, even gruesome. But their visual motifs—miscarried fetuses, human hearts, skeletons, demonic monkeys—aren't gratuitous. Instead, they fit squarely within the Mexican artistic tradition, ranging from its beginnings in pre-Columbian fertility statuary to its post-conquest retablos, iconographic offerings made to Christ and various saints after salvation from physical catastrophe.

Kahlo often said that she suffered two calamitous accidents during her life. The first, a collision with a bus during her teens, produced, among other injuries, a triple fracture of the pelvis, compound breaks in her spinal column and a deeply slashing puncture wound caused by a steel handrail. The second, she often declared with the same black humor that helped her survive a lifetime of physical torments, was her tempestuous, often agonized relationship with her husband, the brilliant muralist and compulsively philandering Diego Rivera, whose appetites eventually led to an affair with Kahlo's sister Cristina. Yet Kahlo's adoration of Rivera was unwavering; and, in turn, she had no greater artistic teacher and champion. It was Rivera who encouraged Kahlo to begin painting seriously again after she suffered a miscarriage, teaching her to look to pre-Columbian and votive art for inspiration.

Herrera's biography is complemented by a reissue of her own stellar critical study, *KAHLO: THE PAINTINGS*, as well as by a glossy companion volume to the film, which contains her commentary, lavish pictorials, and the screenplay of the Taymor movie. Actor Edward Norton, who plays Nelson Rockefeller in the film, is given no official credit for the exquisitely constructed and highly literate screenplay, but he is deservedly thanked by the project's major players, Taymor, Herrera and Salma Hayek.

To bring Kahlo's story to the screen, Hayek, the film's star, had to overcome considerable resistance from Hollywood studios, which were reluctant to green-light a project about a Hispanic female artist. After reading the actress's introduction to the Newmarket Press volume, it's more than a little unsettling to realize how many years it took, despite Hayek's ever-growing box-office power and the passionate support of actors like Norton, Alfred Molina and Ashley Judd. It should be obvious to anyone who in recent years has visited eBay that interest in Kahlo herself has grown exponentially. Furthermore, as all of the books under discussion here prove, the Kahlo-Rivera circle—which included Leon Trotsky, Edward Weston, Tina Modotti and Andre Breton—scintillated with as much innate drama, mordant glamour, sexuality and historical/political fireworks as anything our most novelistic and literate American filmmakers have been able to devise since Scorsese and Coppola in their heyday.

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Pollopicu says

Read it many years ago but I remember deeply enjoying it. It inspired me to go on a literary Frida bio rampage. I would read it again.

Daisy Rivera says

Frida is a hero to women in Mexico and anyone who has ever had to suffer for any reason. In her paintings and in her life she shows so much strength and endurance and is a beacon of hope for anyone. This book is a good way to get to know the events in her life that led to the amazing things she portrayed in her portraits.

Susan Liston says

I read this in tandem with *Frida: A Biography* as it has better and more reproductions and photographs. Reading it alone would still provide a good overview of Frida's life and art.

Howard says

I've been reading this book a few pages at a time over the past couple of months, which proved an ideal way to enjoy Herrera's insightful journey through Kahlo's extraordinary art and how central it was to her very existence.

I've been a huge fan of Kahlo since watching the movie *Frida* for the first time in about 2003, and seeing a superb exhibition of her work at the Tate Modern a couple of years later. The film, based on Herrera's biography published in 1983, brought Kahlo to the world stage, and the Tate show -- the first major exhibition of her art for twenty years or more -- cemented her reputation and prompted a reissue of *Frida Kahlo: The Paintings*.

There is no greater expert on Kahlo than Herrera, and she does a wonderful job here of chronologically walking the reader through the life, loves, influences, politics and tragic moments of Kahlo's eventful life to provide a context and understanding of her paintings, well over a hundred of which are reproduced in the book.

Everything about *Frida Kahlo: The Paintings* is splendid. The writing is focussed and penetrating, the reproduction quality is excellent, the layout is highly readable, and the notes, bibliography and index very convenient for the reader. I wish all such books could be as pleasurable and illuminating to read as this tribute to an artist whose life and work were full of originality and magnetism.

abatage says

I've always been a fan of Kahlo's paintings, but never knew a whole lot about her beyond that film that was out a few years ago. The book features a whole mess of paintings and photographs, accompanied by an entirely readable biography. The best parts of the biography are the suggestions for what certain paintings mean and how the symbols Kahlo frequently used were relevant to her life at the time. It's a good book for a decent coverage of Kahlo's life and some very nice reproductions of her work.

Ellen says

I'm not sure why, but I never tire of learning about Frida Kahlo.

J says

A wonderful and concise look into the life and work of an important 20th-Century artist. It bridges the gap between biography and critical analysis without getting too text heavy or detail oriented. This would be an excellent resource for the student of art history who wishes to get a quick introductory glance into the life and career of such an important Feminist icon, and no less a valuable resource for the serious artist wishing to learn a thing or two about how to paint a portrait with meaningful symbolism.

Ali says

This was a good compilation of Kahlo's work, but if you've read Herrera's bio, there's no real need to actually read this, too. It only gives a very brief overview of Kahlo's life, and all of the information, including analysis of the paintings, can be found in the bio, plus a lot more. I read the original edition of the bio, so I'm not sure if newer versions have more/better illustrations, but this is great to have by your side to see bigger and more colored versions of her work as you read about them.

Cindy says

Fascinating look at the preeminent artist of Mexico. At first glance her work appears ugly. An in depth look and analysis reveals an astounding work. Shocking and dramatic. No one ever put a woman's pain and suffering to canvas like Frida.
