

Kids @ CAM – At Home Family Projects

Spotlight on Art History

Frida Kahlo

About the Artist:

“I paint self-portraits because I am so often alone, because I am the person I know best.”

Frida Kahlo (1907 – 1954) was considered one of Mexico's greatest artists who began painting mostly self-portraits after she was severely injured in a bus accident. She had to wear a full body cast for three months. To pass the time and alleviate the pain, she started painting and finished her first self-portrait the following year. Kahlo later became politically active and married fellow Communist artist Diego Rivera in 1929. Kahlo and Rivera went through several periods of separation, divorced in 1939 and then remarried in 1940. While she never considered herself a surrealist, Kahlo befriended one of the primary figures in that artistic and literary movement, Andre Breton, in 1938. "Really I do not know whether my paintings are surrealist or not, but I do know that they are the frankest expression of myself". Kahlo experienced illness throughout her life, and often depicted how she felt through her self-portraits, which were known for their honesty and stark imagery.



ART AT HOME – PERSONALITY SELF PORTRAIT

What You Will Need:

- Large sheet of background paper and another sheet of paper
- Paints (tempura or watercolor)
- Brushes
- Pencil
- Sharpie and markers
- Magazines, newspapers, or other items to cut pictures out of
- Glue
- Mirror

Frida Kahlo was known for expressing parts of her life through her self-portraits. Think about how you can express different aspects of your personality through the images you choose to include, such as the things you love most, your favorite pastimes, words, etc.

- Step 1 – Position yourself comfortably in front of your mirror and use your pencil to make a sketch of your face. Outline your sketch with a sharpie.
- Step 2 – Paint in the details of your face and place it aside to dry.
- Step 3 – Go through your magazines and cut out pictures that you identify with.
- Step 4 – Once your self portrait is dry, cut it out.
- Step 5 – Arrange your self portrait and your cut outs on your background sheet.
- Step 6 – Once you are happy with the lay out, glue down your pieces.
- Step 7 – If there are things you want to include in your picture but were unable to find them, draw or paint them in.
- Step 8 – Clean up your work area.

Tips:

- Self portraits can be challenging, so do your best and have fun with it!
- Cut out lots of different items so you have plenty to choose from.

Questions to Ask One Another:

- Discuss why you chose the items you included in your portrait.
- Give your portrait a title.
- Frida Kahlo's self portraits often depicted sadness and challenges in her life. What kind of a mood does your portrait evoke?

Follow Up Project Suggestion:

- Using a large sheet of paper, outline your entire body. Fill in your outline using a combination of details of how you look as well as images that express your personality. This will create a more surreal self-portrait.

