



Practice

Reading time: 5~7 minutes

Frida Kahlo



Looking at one of Frida Kahlo's many self-portraits, one tends to focus on the striking features. Her connected eyebrows and the thin line of hair on the upper lip are somewhat surprising to see. Their prominent display in her paintings is just a small part of how she presented herself and her art to the rest of the world.

It is an understatement to say that Kahlo led a difficult life. She was born in Mexico during its revolutionary period in the first decade of the 20th century. When Kahlo was eighteen, a bus she was riding on collided with a trolley. She was impaled by a handrail through her stomach and uterus, breaking her spine in multiple locations, as well as many other of her bones. Miraculously, she recovered and was even able to walk again. Kahlo would suffer from excruciating pain for the rest of her life, though, and was also unable to have children. This experience and many others would affect the art that she made.

She had a tumultuous marriage with the famous muralist, Diego Rivera. The relationship was fraught with affairs on both sides. Frida Kahlo once even courted Leon Trotsky, who had been exiled from Russia and then traveled to Mexico.

Kahlo was never as famous as her husband or his contemporaries during her lifetime. In recent decades, her work has gained more widespread attention. Her paintings were often autobiographical in nature and included very stark symbols representing physical and mental pain and her inability to have children.

(254 words)

Questions 1–5

Answer the questions below, using **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

Write your answers in boxes 1–5 on your answer sheet.

- 1 What kind of paintings did Kahlo create most?
- 2 What did Kahlo have to live with most of her life?
- 3 What phrase would characterize Kahlo's relationship with Diego Rivera?
- 4 What are Kahlo's paintings often described as?
- 5 What can one see throughout many of Kahlo's paintings?