

Frida Kahlo





Frida Kahlo

The Artist in the Blue House

Prestel

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What a proud looking woman!

But she also seems a bit serious, with her hair pulled up and wound into a turban. Even her eyebrows, which meet in the middle, make her appear rather stern. But look more closely ... those same eyebrows resemble a bird in flight! In fact, birds are everywhere in this picture. Two brightly-colored parrots are perching happily on the woman's shoulders and two more are sitting in her lap.

Who could this woman be?
Where does she come from?
Who painted her?

The woman in the picture painted her own portrait.

Her name is **Frida Kahlo** and she lived in Mexico.

Me and My Parrots, 1941





**In her paintings,
the artist tells
the story of her life.**



**Guillermo Kahlo and Matilde Calderón on their
wedding day, photograph, 1898**



Frida Kahlo aged 5 (front left) with her sisters and other relatives, 1912

The photo above shows Frida with other members of her family taken in her parents' garden when she was a little girl.

In the painting opposite, the red ribbon in her hand leads to her grandparents. Frida's mother's parents (top left) were Mexican and her father's parents (top right) came from Europe. They look very different, don't they? In the middle of the picture, Frida painted her parents on their wedding day. Little Frida is already in her mother's womb.

My Grandparents, My Parents, and I, 1936



Accident, 1926

When Frida was eighteen years old, she was in a terrible accident. The bus she was traveling on ran into a streetcar, and Frida was badly injured. In this pencil sketch she made a year later, the crash can be clearly seen. Frida is lying on a stretcher, all bound up in bandages.

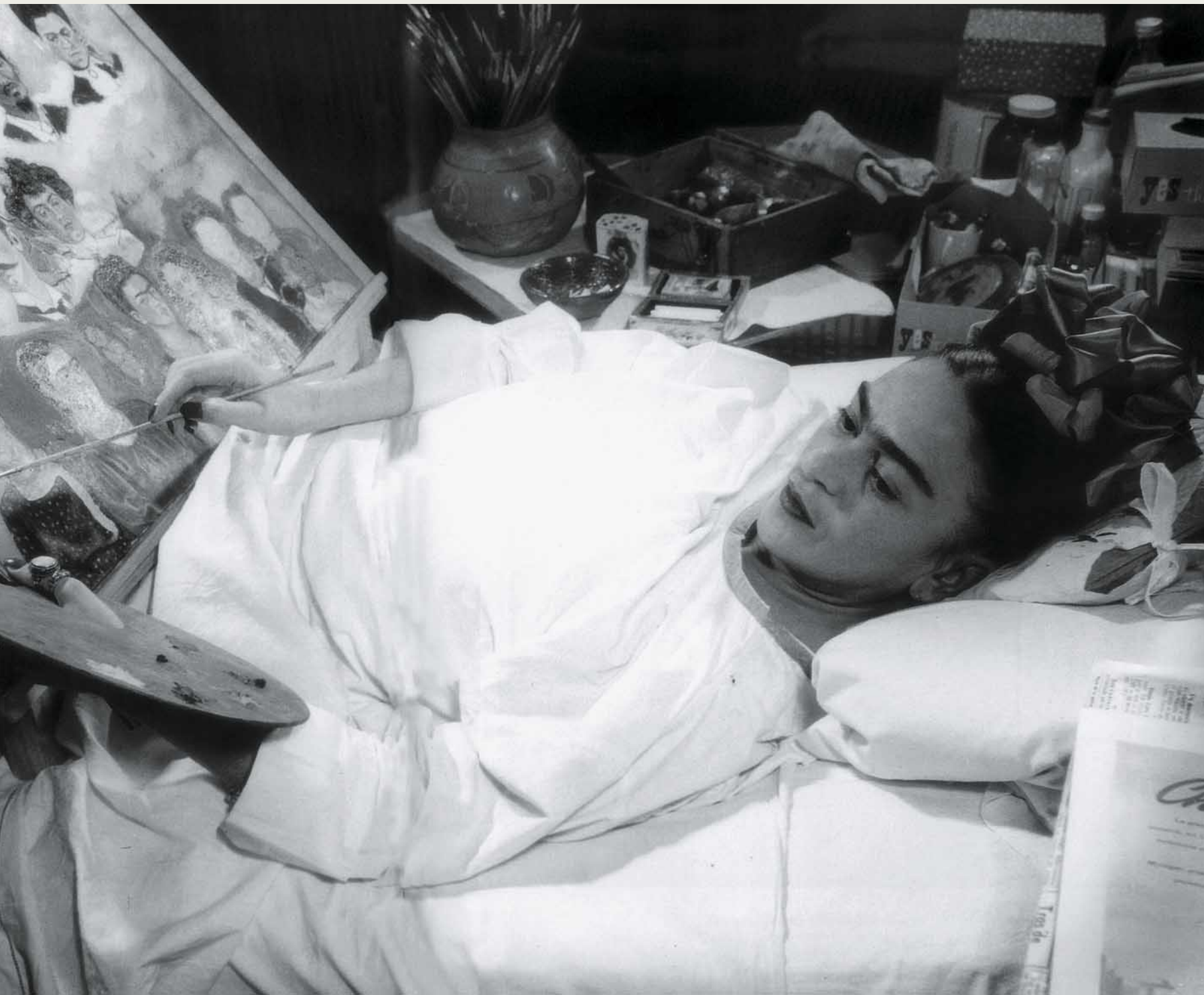
The accident completely changed her life, forcing her to spend months in bed. It was during that time that she started painting to help deal with the pain and the boredom. Even years later, Frida often had to paint lying down in bed because she was too ill to sit up.

Can you see who the people are in this painting?

They are the artist's parents and grandparents.



Frida Kahlo painting in bed, 1952





Frida Kahlo 43

In this picture Frida looks like an exotic princess. She is wearing the traditional costume of the Tehuana, a proud and confident people who lived in Mexico for many centuries. Frida always liked to dress up. As a young girl she often wore men's suits, and when she was older she dressed like a Tehuana woman. Lace frames her beautiful but serious face; and on her forehead, directly above her curved eyebrows, is the face of a man.



Frida in the traditional costume of a Tehuana woman in front of her collection of ethnic Mexican ceramic ware, 1942

His name is **Diego Rivera** and he was also a famous Mexican painter.

But why did Frida paint him as if he were inside her own head?

Self Portrait as Tehuana Woman, 1943