

FRIDA
KAHLO



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FRIDA KAHLO (1907-1954)

Hammer and Sickle (and unborn baby)

c. 1950

dry plaster and mixed media

16¼ x 13 x 6 in. (41.2 x 33 x 15.2 cm)



WATCH VIDEO

PROVENANCE

Acquired from the artist
Francisco González de la Fuente, La Granja, by descent
Jesús González Vaquero
By bequest to Private Collection, Switzerland
Artemundi Global Fund
Private Collection, Bruxelles

EXHIBITION:

Galerías "La Granja" formerly the site of the Santa Clara Convent, property of "Don Paco" (Francisco González de la Fuente)
Mexico City, Mexico, Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, *Frida Kahlo, 1907-2007*. Homenaje Nacional, June 13 - August 19, 2007
Mexico City, Mexico, Banco Nacional de México y Fomento Cultural Banamex, *Palacio de Iturbide, La Mirada de un Anticuario*, 2007
Berlin, Germany, Martin Gropius-Bau, *Frida Kahlo Retrospektive*, April 30 – August 9, 2010; this exhibition later traveled to Vienna, Kunstforum Wien, September 1 – December 5, 2010
Ontario, Canada, Art Gallery of Ontario, *Frida & Diego: Passion, Politics and Painting*, October 20, 2012 – January 20, 2013; this exhibition later traveled to Atlanta, High Museum of Art, February 14 - May 12, 2013
Rome, Italy, Quirinale, Palaexpo, *Frida Kahlo*, March 20th - August 31, 2014
Genova, Italy, Palazzo Ducale, *Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera*, September 20, 2014 - February 8, 2015
New York, USA, Throckmorton Fine Art, *Mirror Mirror...Portraits of Frida Kahlo*, May 21 - September 12, 2015
Milan, Italy, Museum of Cultures (MUDEC), *Frida Kahlo. Beyond the Myth*, February 1 - June 3, 2018
London, United Kingdom, Victoria & Albert Museum, *Frida Kahlo: Making Herself Up*, June 16 – November 18, 2018
New York, USA, Brooklyn Museum, *Frida Kahlo: Appearances Can Be Deceiving*, February 8, 2019 – May 12, 2019
San Francisco, USA, De Young Museum, *Frida Kahlo: Appearances Can Be Deceiving*, September 25, 2020- May 2, 2021

LITERATURE

Flores, Caballero R. *El Ropero de Frida*. México: Zweig Editoras, 2007. p. 48.
Fuentes, Carlos. *National Homage 1907-2007*. R.M. Editorial, 2008.
Garduño, A., González Vaquero, J. *La Mirada de un Anticuario*. México: Fomento Cultural Banamex, 2007, p. 18.
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Grimberg, Salomon. *Frida Kahlo*. North Dighton: World Publications Group, Inc. 2006. p. 32.
Herrera, Hayden. *Frida Kahlo: Las Pinturas (1986)*. México: Diana, 1986 and 2005, pp. 180, 197.
Kettenmann, Andrea, and Karen Williams. *Frida Kahlo 1907-1954: Pain and Passion*, 2016.
Laidlaw, Jill A. *Frida Kahlo*, Barcelona: Blume, 2004, p. 38. Print
Martínez, and Vidal S. *Frida Kahlo - Fashion as the Art of Being*. 2016. Print (cover and illustration)
Monsiváis, Carlos. *Frida Kahlo, Una Vida, Una Obra*. México: Ediciones ERA, Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1992, pp. 46, 167.
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Prignitz-Poda, Helga. *Frida Kahlo e Diego Riera*. Milano: Skira, 2014, cat. 252, pp. 146, 265.
Prignitz-Poda, Helga. *Frida Kahlo: Retrospektive*. Munchen: Prestel, 2010, cat. 158, pp. 53.
Tuer, Dot, Elliott King. *Frida & Diego: Passion, Politics and Painting*. Art Gallery of Ontario. 2012. p. 77.
Walker, Katri. *Frida Kahlo: Appearances Can Be Deceiving*. San Francisco: De Young Museum, 2020.
Wilcox, Claire, and Circe Henestrosa. *Frida Kahlo: Making Herself Up*. 2018. pp. 66-83.
Zamora, Martha. *Frida, El Pincel de la Angustia*. México: Marta Zamora, 1987 and 2007, p. 109.
Zamora, Martha. *Frida Kahlo: The Brush of Anguish*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1990, pp. 119, 127.

— IMPORTANT FACTS

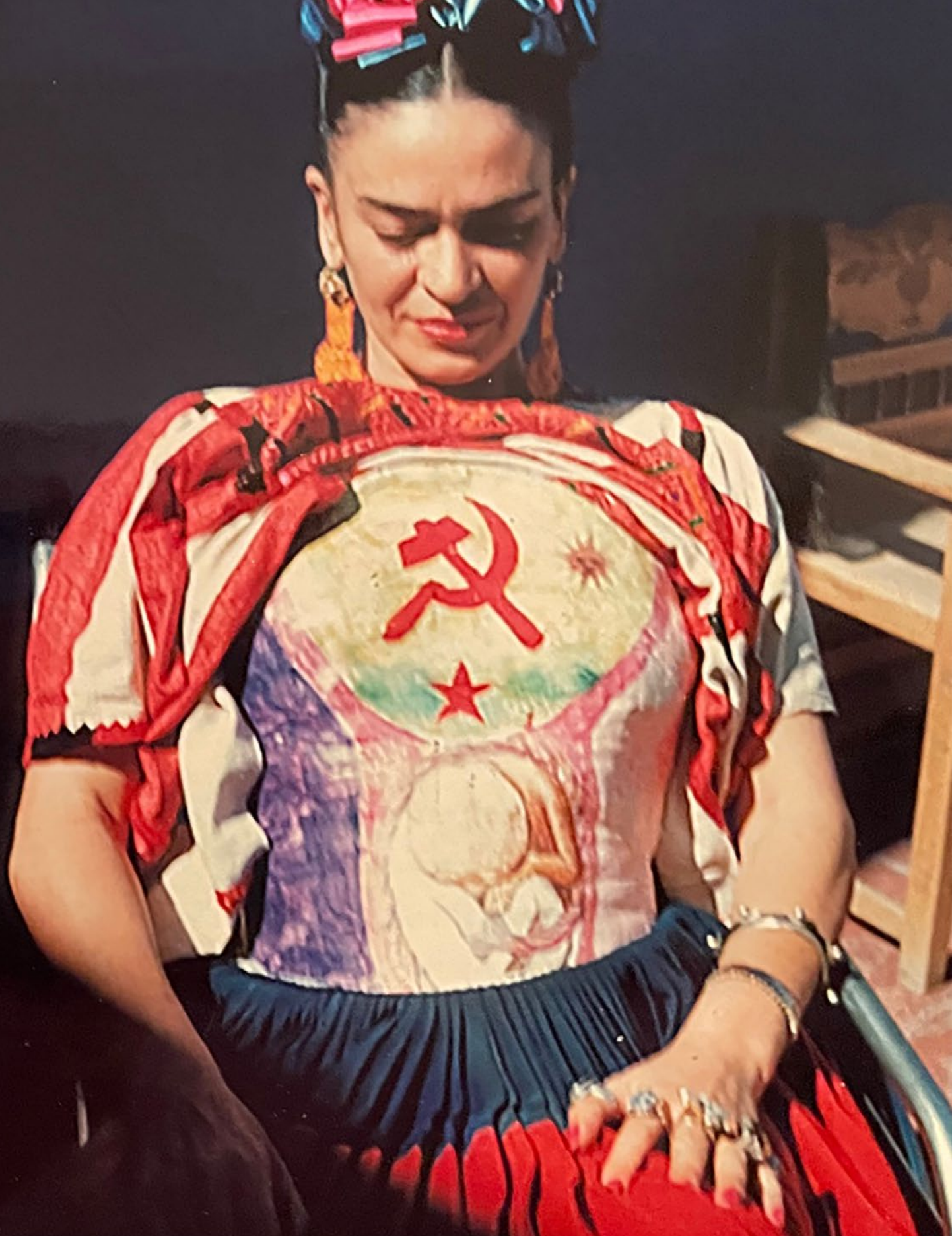
- Among the many belongings revealed at Casa Azul were her clothes, jewelry, drawings, letters, documents and photographs, as well as the most personal and moving items: the orthopedic plaster corsets she turned into an extension of herself.
- On this particular corset, Kahlo painted a blood-red Hammer and Sickle expressing her lifelong political sympathies, and below, a developing fetus, a reminder of the still deeper insult of the accident – her inability to bear children.
- Since 2007, Kahlo's *Plaster Corset with Hammer and Sickle (and unborn baby)* has travelled worldwide in a number of prestigious exhibitions.
- One of three plaster corsets painted by Kahlo, and the only one owned privately. The other two are in the collection of the Museo Frida Kahlo.

DETAIL IMAGES









TOP PAINTINGS SOLD AT AUCTION



*Dos Desnudos En El Bosque
(La Tierra Misma)*

1939

oil on metal

9 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 12 in. (24.7 x 30.4 cm)

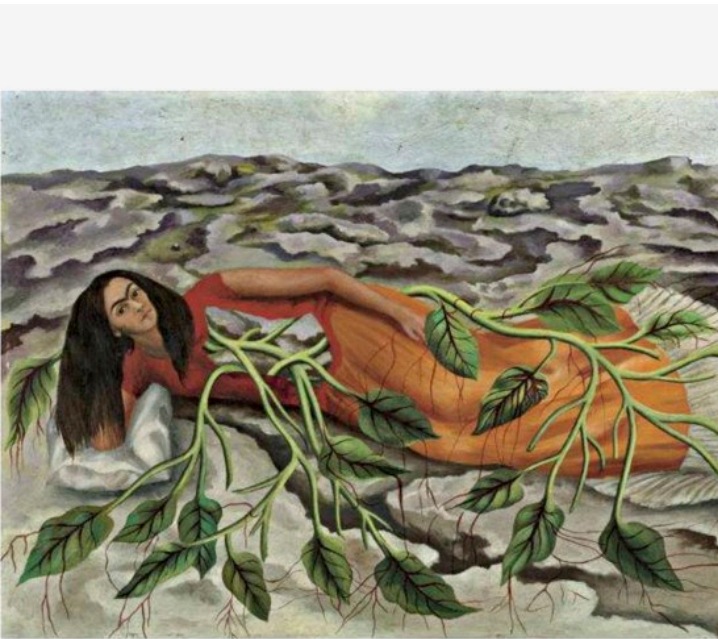
**Sold at Christie's New York:
May 2016 for \$8,005,000**

Portrait of a Lady in White
c. 1929
oil on canvas
46 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 32 in. (118.1 x 81.2 cm)

**Sold at Christie's New York:
November 2019 for \$5,836,500**



TOP PAINTINGS SOLD AT AUCTION

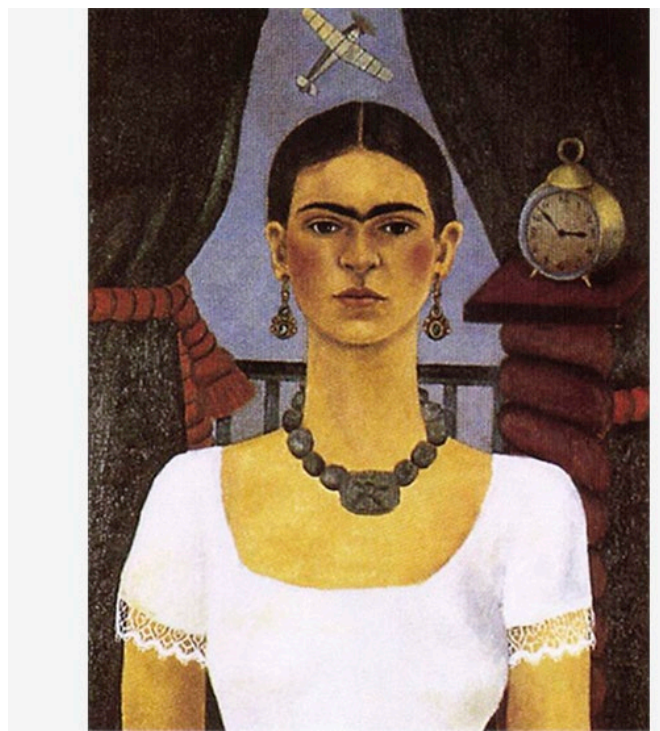


Roots
1943
oil on metal
11 $\frac{3}{4}$ X 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (29.8 x 50.1 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
May 2006 for \$5,616,000**

Self-Portrait
1929
oil on masonite
30 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 24 in. (77.4 x 60.9 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:
May 2000 for \$5,065,750**



KAHLO PAINTINGS IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



**Museo de Arte Moderno
Mexico City**

The Two Fridas
1939

oil on canvas

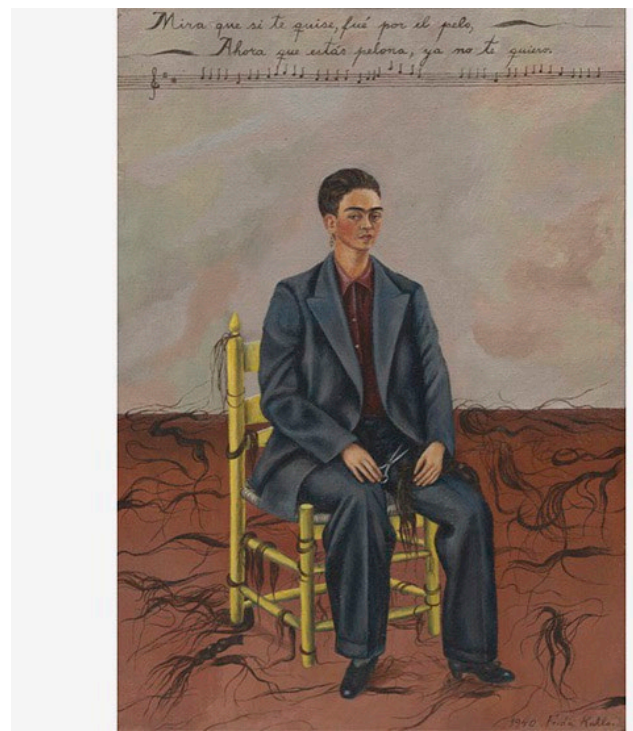
68 x 68 in. (172.7 x 172.7 cm)

**The Museum of Modern Art
New York**

Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair
1940

oil on canvas

15 ¾ x 11 in. (40 x 27.9 cm)



FRIDA KAHLO'S PAINTED CORSETS



**Museo Frida Kahlo
Mexico City**

Plaster Corset
Painted and decorated by Frida Kahlo

**Museo Frida Kahlo
Mexico City**

Plaster Corset
Painted and decorated by Frida Kahlo



"They thought I was a Surrealist, but I wasn't. I never painted dreams. I painted my own reality."

Frida Kahlo

HISTORY



Frida Kahlo, 1938

When Frida Kahlo died in 1954, a grief-stricken Diego Rivera had her belongings locked away for fifteen years, and her personal effects remained sealed, undisturbed, and undocumented until 2004 when the small room in the home her father built in Coyoacán, Mexico was opened to the world. Among the many belongings revealed at Casa Azul were her clothes, jewelry, drawings, letters, documents, and more than 6,500 photographs (among them works by Edward Weston, Tina Modotti, Man Ray, and Nickolas Muray) as well as the most personal and ironically moving item: the orthopedic plaster corsets she turned into an extension of herself. These harsh clinical objects assaulted her free-spirited nature, yet they remain today as the most palpable reminders that as she suffered through unbearable pain — over thirty surgeries, batteries of tests, X-rays, spinal taps, blood transfusions, physical therapy and strong pain killing drugs, she was an absolute survivor, not a victim.

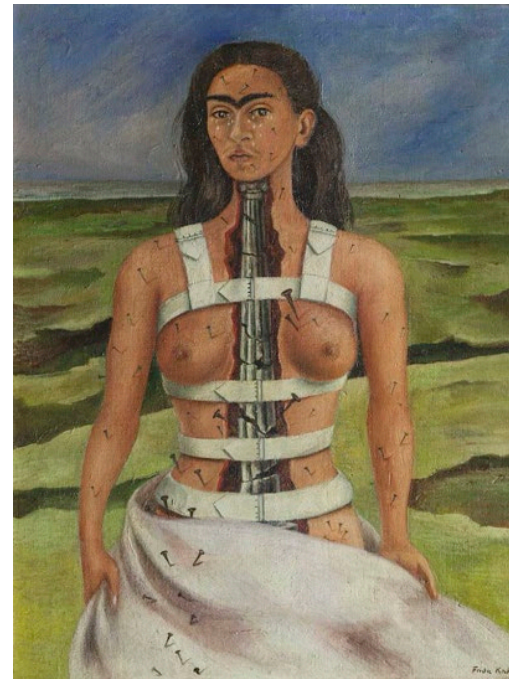
It was Frida's father, Guillermo who gave her his box of paints and brushes as she was recovering from the bus accident that had shattered her spine. The devastation she suffered is shown in excruciating detail in her 1944 painting, *The Broken Column*. Yet the first canvas she painted upon was the most convenient one — the plaster cast bodice encasing her body. As she related, she had dreamed of becoming a doctor, yet "to combat the boredom and pain (and) without giving it any particular thought, I started painting." Later, her mother asked a carpenter to fashion an easel "if that's what you can call the special apparatus which could be fixed to my bed because the plaster cast didn't allow me to sit up." (Andrea Kettenmann, *Frida Kahlo: 1907-1954: Pain and Passion*, Taschen, 1999, pg. 18)

On this particular corset, Kahlo painted a blood-red Hammer and Sickle, the symbolic configuration representing proletarian solidarity — a union between the peasantry and working-class expressing her lifelong political sympathies and below, a developing fetus entering perhaps its third trimester, a reminder of the still deeper insult of the accident, the one that added a layer of suffering and regret to Frida's personal tragedy — her inability to bear children. Frida's corsets hardened around her resolve as much as her body,



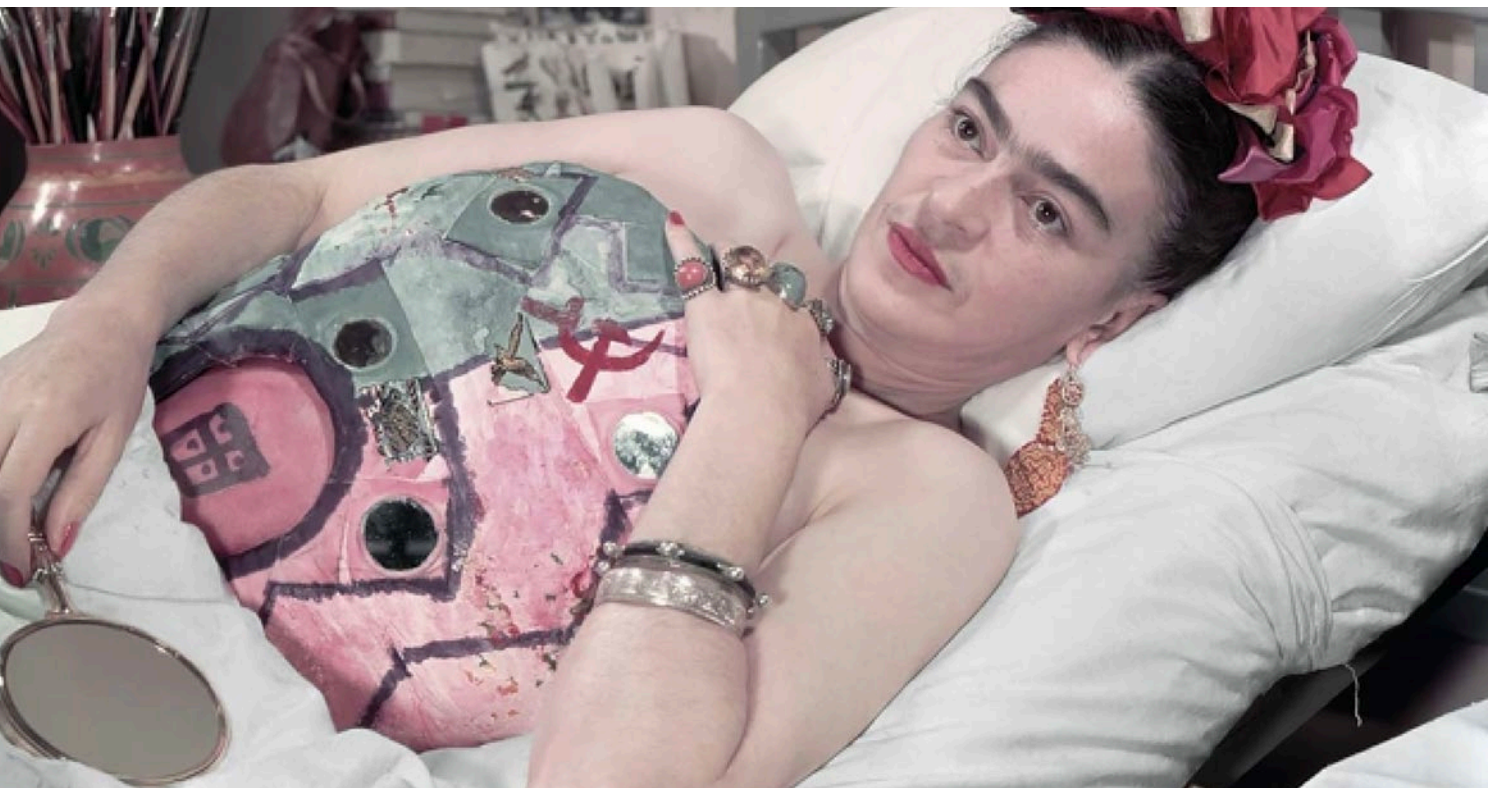
Diego kisses Frida at the Hospital Ingles ABC, Mexico City, 1950

Frida Kahlo
The Broken Column, 1944
Museo Dolores Olmedo Patino
Mexico, Mexico City



but they also speak of her almost unbearable longing. They are ruminations on the power of creativity to heal as well as demonstrations of Frida Kahlo's unbounded capacity for confronting the very bodily enclosures that imprisoned her, transforming them, taking them over as much as she could, and turning them into something beautiful and expressive.

When Frida Kahlo's room at Casa Azul was opened in 2004, her personal belongings captivated the world with an intimate glimpse into the life of one of Mexico's most celebrated and influential artists. Since 2007, Kahlo's *Plaster Corset with Hammer and Sickle (and unborn baby)* has travelled worldwide in a number of prestigious exhibitions in Mexico, Europe, and the U.S. It was first shown to a broad public audience at Mexico City's Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes in *Frida Kahlo, 1907-2007. Homenaje Nacional* (2007), and over the next decade was featured in major exhibitions in Berlin, Ontario, Rome, Genova, New York, Milan, and London. Most recently, it appeared with two other plaster corsets in *Frida Kahlo: Appearances Can Be Deceiving* (September 25, 2020 – May 2, 2021), which traveled from the Brooklyn Museum to the De Young Museum in San Francisco.





The corset on display in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London as part of *Frida Kahlo: Making Herself Up*, from 16 June 2018 to 18 November 2018.





HEATHER JAMES

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